

Labour's  
Secretary



# THE GUARDIAN

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University Of Jordan  
Center of Strategic Studies  
READING ROOM



Scargill refuses to 'crawl' • Flurry of letters fails to bridge gap

## Kinnock censure falls to 'Tory wreckers' Willis attempts to rescue pit talks

By Ian Aitken, Political Editor

The House of Commons yesterday witnessed one of its most venomous exchanges of raucous abuse and sheer disruption when Labour opened its censure motion on the government's handling of the economy.

A bitter row broke out later over who was responsible for the disruption, with the Tories being accused of deliberately orchestrating a successful effort to wreck the opening speech of the Labour leader, Mr Neil Kinnock.

Mr Kinnock, speaking in the first full-scale censure debate of the present parliament and the first since he was elected leader of the Labour Party, tried to make the impact he needed.

Many colleagues were convinced that the reason for his failure was a concerted effort by Tory backbenchers to shout him down, disrupt the train of his economic policy, and to throw him off his stride.

There was some evidence at Westminster that his behaviour had been organised by the Government whips although

Parliament, page 6

backbenchers who took part in the disruptive demonstration indignantly denied that they had been acting as a team. Winding up the debate, the Chancellor did his best to cool expectations of tax cuts in his coming budget, even though he acknowledged that these expectations had been aroused by himself. His message, however, was that he would not be a tax cut in the international market, but he would be a tax cut in the domestic market.

It was in the eyes of Labour MPs the ultimate acknowledgment that Mr Lawson's speech was also the principle of market forces, and followed a successful speech from Mr Roy Hattersley, shadow chancellor and deputy leader of the Opposition. Mr Hattersley's persistent question to Mr Lawson which remained unanswered was whether the Chancellor's policies would begin to work.

In the vote the Opposition's censure motion was defeated by 355 to 222, a Government majority of 133.

Opposition leaders heard the speech, and during much of Mrs Thatcher's reply, it was louder and longer than on any previous occasion.

In spite of this, Mr Kinnock succeeded in levelling some serious allegations at the Government for its failure to hold down unemployment or to boost the economy.

He declared that Britain had endured more than five years of what the Chancellor described as "the British experiment".

During those years, Britain's trade in manufactured goods had plunged from a surplus of £1.5 billion in 1978 to a deficit of £4 billion in 1984.

During the same period, he said, Britain had lost more than £40 billion in output and 2 million people had been put out of work. Moreover, British industrial relations had been reduced to stark confrontation, with the Government spending £2.5 billion to sustain the pit strike.

Mr Kinnock's words could hardly be heard above the hubbub, and a succession of Tory MPs rose to claim the privilege of an intervention. The Speaker, Mr Bernard Weatherill, was forced to his feet to point out that Mr Kinnock was not giving way and his interruptions had no right to persist.

Labour chiefs were clearly upset by Mr Kinnock's failure

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By Keith Harper, Labour Editor

Mr Norman Willis, the TUC general secretary, last night intervened in the coal dispute by asking miners' leaders to stand by until today while he did his best to reconcile the differences with the National Coal Board.

In a two-minute appearance before the National Union of Mineworkers' executive, which had been meeting all day at TUC headquarters, Mr Willis said that he had been in contact with the NCB and was doing his best to assist in bringing both sides together.

No one dissented from this appeal, although members of the executive said afterwards

NCBs rethink pits deal, and Dublin lawyers clash over funds, page 4; Leader Comment, page 14. Coming to terms with compromise, page 15.

that some positive results would have to be seen today, or there would be no point in them having any longer.

Mr Willis made his intervention after speaking to the three NUM national officials, including Mr Arthur Scargill, the president.

There was no official Coal Board reaction to Mr Willis's intervention but the view at Houghton House, the NCB headquarters, late last night was that Mr Willis could bridge the gap between the union and

the board over the central question of uneconomic pits, formal talks between the two sides was a possibility.

A flurry of letters between the NUM and the NCB has done nothing to raise hopes that an early end to the dispute is imminent. Mr Scargill rejected the suggestion that the TUC was making a final attempt to get talks going. Asked how Mr Willis could open the door to negotiations, Mr Scargill replied: "He might have a different key."

The NUM president stressed that the miners' executive was not going "begging and crawling" for a resumption of negotiations. However, the union did want to see an end to the dispute in the interests of the miners and the British people.

According to executive members, the national officials have so far not divulged the contents of the last letter sent by the union to the board. Several of them expressed anger last night that Mr Michael Eaton, the board's chief spokesman, said yesterday that the letter had established five points for discussion, when the executive had been adamant that no preconditions should be set by either side for a meeting.

The executive was adjourned for a long period yesterday while it waited for the board's reply. When it came, there was another letter from Mr Willis.

The five points are:

1. Joint discussions and a review of the Plan for Coal.

2. An agreement on the five pits currently threatened with closure - Bullcliffe Wood, Cornwood, Polmaise, Snowdown and Herrington.

3. An amnesty for miners dismissed during the dispute.

4. Withdrawal of the NCB's demand for a special measures such as the Youth Training Scheme is officially estimated to be 475,000, compared with 470,000 at the end of December last year.

The increase due to seasonal factors - mainly slower hiring by the construction industry and as part to Christmas jobs - is put at 105,000, although officials are not confident of the seasonal adjustments on what is a relatively new series of figures.

The best guide to the underlying trend - the seasonally adjusted adult total - rose by 15,000 since December, up 150,000 over the year. The monthly rise was the sharpest since September.

It emerged last night that the contents of the letter from the board to Mr Willis were

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## Jobless total soars to official record

By Christopher Huhne, Economics Editor

THE number of unemployed soared to an official record of 3,243,100 in January after an unexpectedly large rise of 122,000. The rise was due mainly to seasonal factors, but there was also a dispiriting spur in the underlying increase.

The Department of Employment's figures effectively dash any faint hope that the remorseless upward trend in unemployment might have slowed down in recent months. Leaders of both sides of industry yesterday called on the Government to take action to aid the recovery.

None of the rise in the jobless can be attributed to the sharp increase in interest rates of 4.5 per cent points over the last month, since unemployment tends to reflect economic activity with a time lag of about six months.

The total is a record for the present series of figures, and now nearly matches the

Lord Young's glass of little cheer, page 11

3,243,100 total in September 1982 when the Government changed the basis of the count to exclude anybody not claiming benefit.

The unemployment unit said yesterday that on the old basis of counting all those who registered, the January total would have been 3,728,500. This would be about 15.2 per cent of the labour force, compared to a rate of 13.9 per cent shown in the new official series.

The unit's figures also include an allowance for the 162,000 people over 60 removed from the count by the budget measures in 1983. The reduction in the unemployment figure below the special measures such as the Youth Training Scheme is officially estimated to be 475,000, compared with 470,000 at the end of December last year.

The increase due to seasonal factors - mainly slower hiring by the construction industry and as part to Christmas jobs - is put at 105,000, although officials are not confident of the seasonal adjustments on what is a relatively new series of figures.

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A coffin containing the body of Masahisa Takenaka is carried by his men on its way to a crematorium

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Mandela offer of freedom

SOUTH AFRICA is ready to release Mr Nelson Mandela, the African National Congress leader, if he renounces violence, but black activists believe he would rather stay in prison. Page 8

### Report 'changed'

THE chief of naval staff during the Falklands conflict told a Whitehall meeting that his account of the General Beltramo ship had been changed by the Ministry of Defence. The fighting case jury heard yesterday. Page 2

### Class defeat

LOCAL authority resistance to the MSC taking over 25 per cent of its college education crumbled yesterday. Page 2

### Prime concern

FISH is a prime national asset. The catch is that we do not eat much of it. Page 16

### England struggles

MOHAMMED AZHARUDDIN (above) was yesterday two years short of an unprecedented three centuries in his first three Tests as India reached 228 for 3 on the first day of the fifth Test against England in Kanpur. Page 22

### Market moves

POUND up 0.0150 to \$1.3115; FT index down 0.6 to 986.1; Dow Jones down 1.1 to 1286.77. Markets, page 21

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### The weather

WINDY with showers. Details, back page.

### WE APOLOGISE

to readers who did not get the Guardian yesterday and to those who received only an early edition not including later news and services. This shortfall was caused by a continuing disagreement involving NGA chapters in our London composing room. We are very sorry.

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Ponting case jury hears of argument over sinking cover-up

# Admiral told Whitehall meeting that Belgrano story was changed

By Richard Norton-Taylor

Admiral Sir John Fieldhouse, chief of naval staff during the Falklands conflict, told a top-level meeting in Whitehall last year that Ministry of Defence officials had changed his account of when the Argentine cruiser, the General Belgrano, was first sighted in order to make it consistent with earlier public statements, the jury in the Ponting case at the Old Bailey was told yesterday.

Although officials denied the claim, Mr Richard Mottram, private secretary to the Defence Secretary, Mr Michael Heseltine, acknowledged that Sir John had made the assertion, and that there was an argument about it. The meeting at the ministry on March 30 last year was also attended by Mr John Stanley, the armed forces minister, Sir Clive Whitmore, permanent secretary at the ministry, and Mr Clive Ponting, a senior Defence Ministry civil servant.

It was held to discuss whether, in answer to parliamentary questions, the Government should admit that the Belgrano was detected on April 30, 1982, and sighted on May 1, not on May 2 as had been originally stated. The May 2 claim had been repeated in a white paper on the Falklands campaign published in December 1982.



Richard Mottram: 'couldn't recall everything'



Sir John Fieldhouse: claim was denied

Sir John said that the correct date had been given in his draft for the Official Dispatch on the campaign published in the London Gazette in December 1982. Mr Bruce Laugland, QC, for Mr Ponting, said that Mr Heseltine told the meeting that after the Sarah Tisdall secrets case the Government could not continue to cover-up details of the Belgrano sinking. Mr Mottram agreed that at that meeting both Sir Clive and Mr Ponting argued in favour of disclosing the information about the detection of the cruiser.

But Mr Stanley, Mr Laug-

land told the court, said that the ministry should say that the information was classified. Mr Mottram said he could not recall every statement made but agreed that Mr Stanley was "cautious about giving information". Mr Ponting, according to Mr Laugland, then said that if the department claimed it was classified, it might be embarrassing since it would have to explain why it had not prosecuted the commander of the Conqueror, the submarine which attacked the Belgrano, for revealing the time he detected and followed the cruiser.

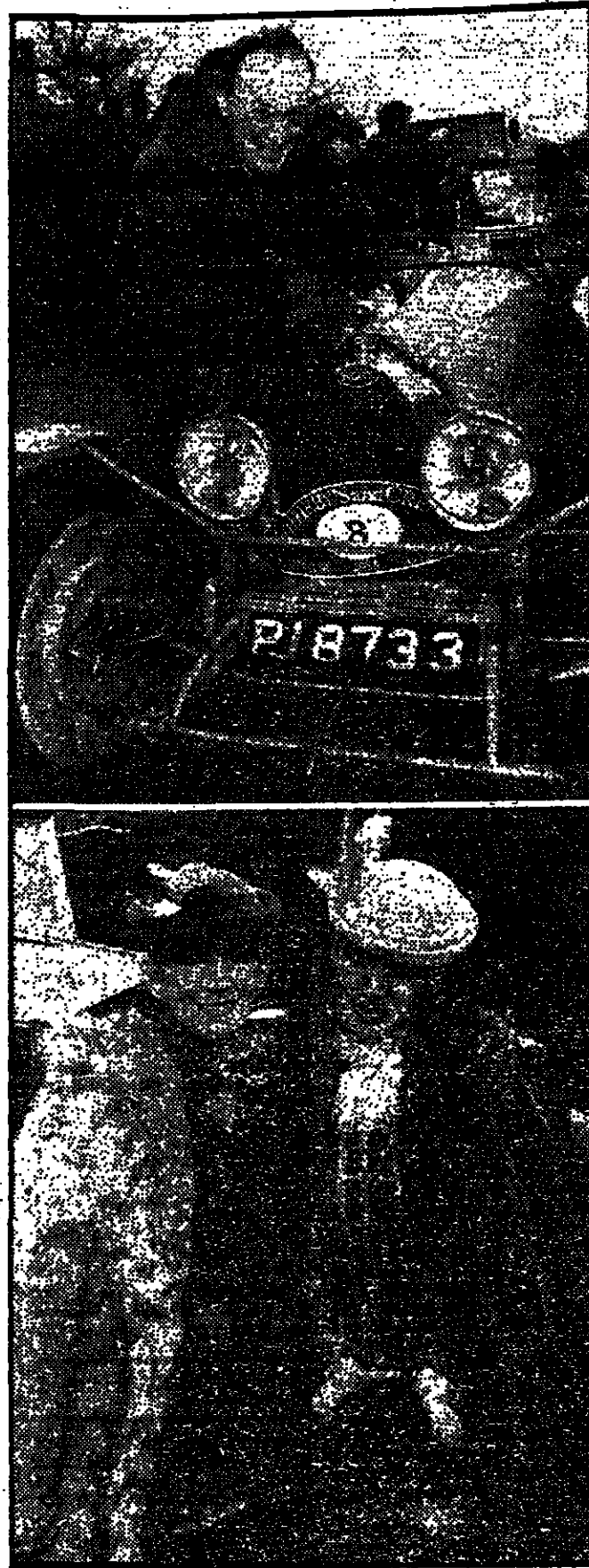
Wreford-Brown did so in a book, *Our Falklands War*, published in 1983. Mr Mottram said he believed that Mr Wreford-Brown did not get permission to use the information. He agreed that Mr Heseltine then said to Mr Stanley: "That's a very good point, John," according to Mr Laugland. Mr Heseltine added: "After Tisdall, we really can't do this."

Mr Nicholas Darns, a former colleague of Mr Ponting in the Ministry of Defence, told Mr Laugland in cross-examination that Detective Inspector Broome, of the ministry police, had last month advised both him and Miss Margaret Aldred, another ministry official, about what would be covered in their court appearance.

A third prosecution witness, Mr Michael Legge, assistant secretary at the ministry, said that Detective Inspector Hughes, also of the ministry police, drew his attention last month to matters on which he would be asked to speak in court.

Mr Richard Hastie-Smith, chief personnel officer at the ministry, later told Mr Roy Amlot, for the prosecution, that under the ministry's security regulations, the Labour MP Mr Tam Dalyell was not an authorised person to receive official information.

The trial continues.



Cresta Runners: Mr John Venables Llewellyn, of Llandrindod Wells, Powys, and the Bugatti he set off in from Regent's Park, London, yesterday heading for St Moritz, Switzerland, and the Cresta Run centenary celebrations. Also taking the road were Barbara and Diane Worthington, bottom, from Philadelphia, with their two brothers in a Rolls-Royce.

## Labour seizes on 'explosion' of argument for rate-capping

By John Carvel, Local Government Correspondent

Labour politicians claimed yesterday that the Government's economic case for rate-capping has been "exploded" following the report in yesterday's *Guardian* of a leaked Cambridge University research study commissioned by the Department of the Environment.

The £50,000 report concluded that there is no relationship between high rates and unemployment in the private sector and suggested that high rates may positively assist job prospects by allowing councils to increase the size of their workforces. This finding has punctured minister's repeated assertions that firms are driven away from high-rated areas.

Mr Jack Straw, Labour's environment spokesman, said the report meant that there was

nothing left in the government's claim that high rates lead to unemployment, which is the basis for their swingeing cuts in local government.

Ministers made these claims without producing a shred of evidence. Mr Straw told the Commons committee considering the GLC abolition bill that it was essential for the Government to make the unpublished report available to MPs as soon as possible. "We want this report before us now — or it is going to be lauded and suppressed by the Government."

The local government minister, Mr Kenneth Baker, replied that he hoped to study the report over the weekend. "The report was commissioned some 18 months ago and is being evaluated at the moment," he said.

The Department of the Envi-

ronment said that the researchers had only delivered their report last week. It was customary for such research to be considered by an inter-departmental steering committee before decisions were taken about its publication.

"The DOE has conducted the research in the normal way without any undue secrecy. It has not yet come up for publication, and we will want to comment on it when it does," the spokesman said.

Mr Ken Livingstone, leader of the Greater London Council, said that the report should be published immediately. The argument that high rates caused fewer jobs has been one of the main pillars of the Government's case for abolishing the GLC and metropolitan counties. It looks as if this report has just blown the Government's case out of the water.

## Colleges operated 'whites only' rule

By Aileen Ballantyne

THE Commission for Racial Equality has found in an informal inquiry that further education colleges in Birmingham have been complying with instructions from employers to send only white applicants for Youth Training Scheme jobs.

Birmingham city council, which is responsible for the YTS college courses, has accepted that the commission had sufficient grounds to justify a formal investigation and has agreed to carry out its own internal inquiry.

This will be a "thorough and determined" spokesman for the Labour-controlled councils said. A senior officer in the education department in each college is to be made responsible for implementing an equal opportunity policy.

The commission has accepted the offer of a council inquiry because it would ensure discrimination ended sooner than if a full CRE inquiry was held.

A CRE spokesman said yesterday: "For many black youngsters, the Youth Training Scheme is the only lifeline." The National unemployment level among black 16- to 19-year-olds was now 50 per cent — double that for whites.

In many cases, he went on, the Birmingham colleges were faced with the choice of refusing to take up offers of extremely scarce YTS places — or taking them only on the "no blacks" condition.

Many employers said, "yes I can take three kids — but don't send me any black ones."

A recent commission survey of representative employers in multi-racial areas outside London showed that of 1,174 YTS trainees in two public utilities, only four were black, compared to 32 out of 95 in London.

The CRE expects other authorities to follow Birmingham's example in dealing with discrimination, and has warned that it is prepared to use its legal powers to ensure that they do.

## Murder charge

A man appeared in court at St James' yesterday charged with the murder of 22-year-old Janice McKinley whose body was found in the grounds of a psychiatric hospital on Monday. Samuel Vincent Packer, aged 41, a patient at Rainhill Hospital, Merseyside, was remanded in custody until February 15.

The financial dealings of Graham Backhouse were outlined on the fourth day of his trial at Bristol Crown Court by Mr Richard Martin, the manager of the National Westminster bank branch at Chipping Sodbury.

Mrs Margaret Backhouse, aged 37, was injured when a home-made bomb exploded under the driving seat of the family car in April 1984.

The Crown has alleged Backhouse planned the device in an attempt to murder his wife and collect £100,000 in life insurance money, to pay pressing debts.

On January 24, 1985, Mr Martin said he had met Back-

## British Rail to axe 700 Scottish jobs amid union fears of plant closure

By Patrick Wintour, Labour Staff

British Rail Engineering is to shed 700 manual jobs in the next two years at its Springburn works in Glasgow.

A further 450 jobs may be lost in the following two years, leaving only 600 workers at the factory which now employs 1,750. In announcing the cuts to union leaders yesterday, Mr Alan Dunkley, the BR Engineering personnel director said the cuts were caused by a drop in demand and not as a result of bad performance.

Although Mr Dunkley denied there was any plan to close the works, Mr George Dyce, the shop stewards' convenor, said he could not see how management planned to keep the workforce busy with such a small throughput of orders. He pointed out that the plan envisaged the works maintaining eight locomotives in 1987

as many as were maintained at present in a fortnight.

"We are not convinced this is a proper plan. What they have presented to us is like suicide. It is death for this place and it's the demise of Springburn. It will make this massive works look more like a garage," he said.

He blamed management for sending vehicles to England for the drop in demand. But Mr Dunkley said the fall in demand was because BR's new generation of vehicles required less maintenance.

The unions are expected to meet next week to discuss the moves, but have so far failed to stem the flow of redundancies at the workshops.

British Rail may face further industrial relations problems if the drivers' union, ASLEF, goes ahead with a formal application to withdraw

## Councils yield in row over courses

By Andrew Mearns, Education Staff

The last resistance by local authorities to the government's plans for giving control of a large part of college education to the Manpower Services Commission crumbled yesterday.

With every sign of reluctance, and still protesting, the Labour-controlled Association of Metropolitan Authorities agreed to take part in a working group with the commission to examine the college courses involved.

The association, which represents 37 local education authorities, strongly objected to parting with 25 per cent of its work-related non-advanced further education courses.

Mrs Nicky Harrison, who chairs the association education committee, said yesterday that it was continuing its battle over the future of the colleges.

She went on: "We are not committing ourselves in any way to accepting the working party's final report."

The commission described the association's decision to join in the working group as the "final piece in the jigsaw." It said: "It is a definite step forward. We welcome this chance to move ahead and to discuss the future arrangements."

"I think they realised that if they pursued that line they would have been cut out of discussions and lost money and any say in how it should be spent."

Sir Roy Harding, former chief education officer of Buckinghamshire, has been asked to chair the working group, which will report in May.

It will be overseen by a policy group, headed by Mr Bryan Nicholson, the commission's chairman, which will include representatives of the local authority association.

## New judge

Mr Johan Van Zyl Stern, QC, aged 62, who became a British subject after a legal career in South Africa, has been appointed a High Court judge and will sit on the Queen's Bench Division.

## MPs bar seamen

By Paul Brown

Mr Jim Slater, general secretary of the National Union of Seamen, who wanted to give evidence to a Commons select committee of alleged Special Branch infiltration of his union issued an angry statement yesterday when he was told that it would not be allowed.

The home affairs select committee decided that it would take no more witnesses after hearing Mr Leon Brittan, the Home Secretary on Wednesday. Mr Slater said that the committee had heard evidence from the minister and chief constables.

A spokesman for the committee said that if Mr Slater would submit written evidence it would be circulated.

## Police put cars on ice

A POLICE force has locked up two high-performance cars after a third was written off in a crash. Devon and Cornwall police bought three 130mph Ford Sierra XR3i cars in November for use by advanced drivers. Within two months one was written off and another damaged in accidents on ice.

A spokesman said: "They will remain off the road until the internal police inquiry into the two accidents has been completed."

A Ford spokesman said: "There are over 1,000 XR3is in service with police forces and we have never heard of any problems. All the published road tests show the behaviour is impeccable."

He also agreed that he did not regard Mr Backhouse as any risk to the bank.

The trial continues today.



Richard Martin

## 'Car bomb farmer owed £71,000'

A farmer Graham Backhouse owed his bank more than £71,000 the day his wife was severely injured by a home-made car bomb, a jury was told yesterday.

The financial dealings of Graham Backhouse were outlined on the fourth day of his trial at Bristol Crown Court by Mr Richard Martin, the manager of the National Westminster bank branch at Chipping Sodbury.

Mrs Margaret Backhouse, aged 37, was injured when a home-made bomb exploded under the driving seat of the family car in April 1984.

The Crown has alleged Back-

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### 'Mean view' on VE Day

THE GOVERNMENT would study very carefully any invitation from Moscow for Britain to take part in Soviet commemorations of VE Day, the Prime Minister told Mr David Winnick, chairman of the Tribune Group of Labour MPs last night.

In a Commons written reply, Mrs Thatcher said the Government would reply to an invitation after consultations with Britain's allies.

### 14 pc pay plea

THE INSTITUTION of Professional Civil Servants, which represents about 90,000 government workers, including scientists, yesterday lodged a claim for a 14 per cent pay rise, the maximum allowed by the increase to help the low-paid.

It argues that half the claim matches current settlements in the private sector, the other 7 per cent was needed to make up the erosion in Civil Service pay over the past few years.

### Pollution curb

NEW pollution controls for coastal waters, estuaries and certain underground waters came into effect yesterday, providing for the first time a maximum fine of £1,000 or three months imprisonment for offenders.

The Control of Pollution Act 1974, now has 21 of its 26 sections operative and the remainder will quickly follow.

## Hope for enterprise board

By John Carvel, Local Government Correspondent

The future of the Greater London Enterprise Board, the largest of the municipal experiments in socialist economic regeneration, is to be decided by ministers over the next few days.

Its directors now believe that the Government has withdrawn from deep ideological opposition to the GLEB and the other enterprise boards set up by Labour councils to promote jobs in the next few years.

Last year, the Environment Secretary, Mr Patrick Jenkin, took powers to control the Greater London Council's discretionary spending under section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, which allows councils to spend a 3p rate in the general interests of their areas. He let it be known that his specific purpose was to choke off further funding for the enterprise board.

The GLC wants to provide £20 million for the board in coming financial year.

The GLEB argues that the money will be matched pound for pound by private sector finance, that it meets only about a quarter of the investment needs for viable projects, and that without it its support for 186 existing enterprises would be threatened.

The outcome of the negotiations is likely to hinge on the economic board's willingness to answer detailed questions

## NUJ chief in pension row goes back to work

By Patrick Wintour, Labour Staff

Mr Ken Ashton, general secretary of the National Union of Journalists, said last night that he would return to work today at the union's headquarters for the first time since the union executive suspended him pending an inquiry into the circumstances surrounding improvements in his pension.

The report of the internal inquiry was given to the union's executive at the weekend, and a five-man disciplinary panel has been set up. It is expected to begin proceedings for at least a fortnight.

Mr Ashton has accused left-wingers in the union of using the issue of the improvement in his pension as part of an attempt by the so-called hard Left and their followers to seize control of the union.

Mr Ashton said: "My terms and conditions of employment are subject to annual review. In relation to my 1983 pay

award, it was put to me that my pension benefits might be improved. This was in line with union thinking about pension benefits. The rates were regularly topped up, up former employees' pensions, and discussions were at the same time taking place with other members of the union's pension scheme with a view to improving the pensions of the scheme generally.

"I agreed to the improvement of my pension, and the matter was then processed by the union's then national office in the same way as any other pay award to me was processed."

The disciplinary panel is expected to concentrate on whether the union's emergency committee was presented with the minutes of the staff committee enhancing the pension of Mr Ashton and a colleague in such a way that it could reasonably be expected to understand the minute's significance.

## Navy plans 'clever' mine

By David Fairhall, Defence Correspondent

The Royal Navy is hoping to develop an "intelligent" mine to update stocks.

Three industrial design teams led by British Aerospace, Ferranti and Marconi have been invited to study the project's feasibility.

Thousands of mines would be required, each costing between £10,000 and £20,000.

The new mine would be an anti-submarine weapon for use in the comparatively shallow waters of the continental shelf.

The offshore oil industry's acoustic techniques for remotely-controlling underwater devices could be adapted to activate unarmoured mines secretly laid in a potential enemy's waters and not declared in the way that international convention normally demands.

## Protesters lose vote

By Paul Brown

Campers at the proposed Moleworth cruise missile base in Cambridgeshire have been warned that they will be taken off the electoral roll by Huntingdon district council.

The council's chief executive, Mr Larry Bly, has written to a dozen registered voters saying that, since they are contravening the Highways Act 1980, they cannot be regarded as legal residents and therefore their names will be removed unless they appear within three days.

However Mr Brig Outbridge, for the Rainbow Village community, said that the 13 lived on Moleworth road, which was not breaking the Highways Act and would appear.

Mr Bly's letter comes days after the campers at Greenham Common were taken off the register.

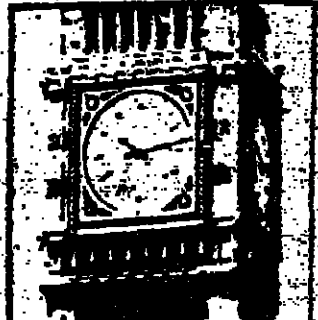
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David McKie

## An arid waste of heat and dust-up

IF they'd been debating a motion of censure on the record of the last Labour government or the role of the Labour movement in the pit dispute, the Prime Minister's performance in the Commons yesterday might have been something close to a triumph.

But they weren't. The censure the House was supposed to be considering yesterday was on the record of a Thatcher-led government, with particular reference to record real interest rates, a record trade deficit, and record unemployment. And there she was much less compelling.

When she laid into Mr Kinnock, his predecessors, and his links with the NUM, the Tories loved it. When she surveyed the events of the past few weeks, when she launched yet again into that catalogue of government achievement which in recent days has become as monotonous as the ticking of the clock, some at least of her supporters fell silent and aghast. At the end of the day they would win the Commons battle, no problem about that. But the battle in the world outside might be a rather different matter.

How it was all going down with the thousands of people who though still denied TV pictures, could pick up the words on the radio, no one at Westminster could tell. But up in the Gallery, Mr Kinnock's challenge and the Prime Minister's response, in a house packed to the rafters, were a silent or even predominantly serious, added up to a dismal and delecting afternoon.

Mr Kinnock has been more than holding his own with the Prime Minister at Question Time lately, but a censure debate belongs in a different league, concerning a government party behind its leaders even in times of apprehension and doubt. Mr

Parliament, page 6

Kinnock was in trouble from the start yesterday. He had hardly begun before Snook Powell was on his feet with a snarling and dignified complaint that Labour's motion referred only to unemployment in Great Britain as if Northern Ireland hardly counted.

Mr Kinnock said he was sorry, acknowledged the sufferings of the Province, gripped hard on his text, and through ceaseless heckling and giggling, ploughed on. But his first contained his undoing. Kin-bled deep inside it was a monstrous, bloated joke about the Chancellor growing a beard (Mrs Thatcher, it is said, wants men about her who are "bearded"); that joke fell horribly flat, and Mr Kinnock with it.

And then came a further disaster. Mr Hattersley, a Tory claimed — had said the pound was now at its right level. Did Neil agree?

But Roy — Mr Kinnock retorted — had said no such thing. What he'd actually said was that it might have reached its right level — not that it had.

The Tories were delicious. Many Labour faces grew grim. Over the heads of one or two little clouds seemed to float, containing the thought: told you so.

Thereafter — most of all when he gripped his text less deservingly and let the spontaneity show through — he gave his troops something to cheer, though what stirred them most was their genuine anger at the spilling tactics of the Tories.

It may read better than it sounded. But on these set-piece occasions it is how they sound that counts. Mr Kinnock's problems yesterday were predictable in this kind of debate, especially when everyone in the building knows that nothing you do or say can imperil the government's life. And Mr Kinnock does not yet command the resources to surmount them.

Later, in a thin House, the Liberal leader, Mr. Sheel, made a calm and sensible speech which may have sounded to people at home like the pick of the three. It may be frustrating to find a small party rather than a big one, but at least it gives you a chance of getting your message across without a hostile barrage. That goes with the job of Leader of the Opposition.



# Contraceptive sponge 'a risk for under-16s'

By Penny Chisholm

Under-16 girls who can no longer obtain contraceptives through a doctor without their parents' consent are expected to turn to the sponge method — which becomes available from today.

The prospect worries birth control specialists and doctors because the sponge, which contains a spermicide, is less safe than other methods of contraception.

The highly fertile under-16 group will be particularly at risk, they warn.

Following an appeal court decision last month, doctors have to obtain the consent of parents before prescribing the Pill for girls under 16.

The sponge has proved popular in the United States, where more than 25 million have been sold since 1983.

In Britain the sponge will be available initially from family planning clinics but from May it will be obtainable over the counter at chemists' shops for £2.50 — £3 for a box of three.

Mrs Walli Bouds, researcher at the Margaret Pyke centre in London said yesterday that the high failure rate made the new method "unsuitable for young highly fertile women not yet ready for pregnancy."

In British trials, one in six women using the method be-

came pregnant during the year of study, a figure which was double that of the control group who were using the diaphragm, the long-established method.

Mr Bruce Vorhauer, the chairman of the VLI Corporation, the patent holder and inventor of the sponge, which is called Today, denied claims by consumer groups in America that the device might cause cancer. Extensive tests had satisfied the drug authority, he said.

The manufacturers said trial results showed an effectiveness rate of 89-91 per cent if women used the sponge consistently and correctly. When those who did not use it consistently and properly were included, the success rate fell to 84 per cent.

Trials are planned in Scotland and a controversial French abortion pill known as RU 486. French doctors claim the pill can be used as a monthly contraceptive to induce abortion. Tests on 40 volunteers are planned by Professor David Baird of Edinburgh University. The trial is subject to approval by the committee on the safety of medicines. The method will be tested on women who are less than eight weeks pregnant who would otherwise have undergone the standard method of abortion.



MATHS HOTLINE: Wendy Borkwood, a teacher at Scott Lidgett School in south London, will help children with maths problems in Homework Hotline, a new spot, beginning tomorrow, in BBC television's Saturday SuperStore. Picture by Garry Weaver

# New 'second marriage' plan

By Martyn Halsall, Churches Correspondent

Bishops of the Church of England say today that the marriage of divorced people in Church of England churches should be left to the clergy.

Anglicans have been seeking in vain for an acceptable change in its marriage discipline since 1968.

Since July 1981 when the General Synod — the Church's parliament — agreed that there were circumstances in which divorced people could be married in church during the lifetime of a former partner. No agreement has been possible on how to bring this about.

Proposals from the House of Bishops, published today are to be debated by the synod this

month, could lead to an agreed service of prayer and dedication in church for divorced people married in civil ceremonies.

The bishops' decision is based on their agreement that a substantial number of church members support such a service.

The bishops hope to retain something of the procedure they were forced to abandon. This provided for clergy to submit cases for second marriage in church to them for their adjudication.

Today's report says that although the ultimate decision must be a matter for the clergyman concerned, the House of Bishops hopes that clergy "who wish to allow a 'second marriage' in church

will seek the advice of their bishops.

Its desire is to achieve as much pastoral consistency and fairness as is possible.

A simple majority in the synod would be enough to approve the bishops' proposals which would not have to be referred to the dioceses. The recently abandoned proposal, which had overwhelming episcopal support, was rejected by 31 of 43 diocesan synods.

The General Synod will be asked to rescind a paragraph from the marriage resolutions of the Convocation of Canterbury to clear the way for a service of dedication, the paragraph forbids any form of public service for divorced people marrying in civil ceremonies.

The bishops' latest proposals are likely to gain the synod's

support. It is still likely to be opposed by those who judge second marriages to be a theological impossibility.

Dr Hugh Montefiore, the Bishop of Birmingham, who had said that he would institute the abandoned procedure, said yesterday he would "wait and see" what the synod decided on the new proposals.

While some clergy have hinted they would leave the Church if marriage discipline was relaxed others have been willing for some years to marry divorced people.

During the last 15 years the number of second marriages in church has increased from six to more than 1,200 a year: about 1 per cent of the total. About a third of marriages now end in divorce.

# 700 arthritis patients take Opren to court

By Andrew Veitch, Medical Correspondent

More than 700 arthritis patients who claim to have suffered after taking the withdrawn drug Opren are suing the manufacturers, Eli Lilly, in the British courts.

They are seeking punitive damages for alleged negligence and breach of duty in making and marketing Opren, and for misrepresentation in promoting it.

Lawyers for the Open Action Committee said yesterday that they had written to health minister and the Committee on Safety of Medicines demanding that they disclose documents

submitted by Lilly when it applied for a licence to market the drug.

The lawyers claimed that they had amassed medical evidence which had not been considered by the CSM when it approved the drug. The drug would not have been allowed on the market, had the evidence been available.

It was presented at a private symposium attended by senior doctors in Manchester last month.

A consultant pharmacologist who has seen the evidence, Dr Andrew Herschler, of Charing Cross Hospital, London,

said yesterday: "It raises questions about the thoroughness of the investigations by the regulatory authorities."

Opren, which came on the market in 1980, was withdrawn in August 1983 after the CSM had received 3,500 reports of adverse reactions and 61 deaths, most of them from liver and kidney damage. Reported deaths eventually reached 82.

Lilly has made out-of-court settlements with United States claimants, but has so far refused to compensate Britons.

The CSM relies on data produced by firms for their drugs,

and Dr Herschler said: "The reason they got it wrong with Opren could apply in other cases. This evidence has important implications for the licensing of all drugs."

A Lilly spokesman said last night: "Lilly acted properly in this matter. Prior to its introduction in the United Kingdom, Opren was the subject of nine years of intensive testing and clinical evaluation. Data from these studies were fully reported to the CSM."

Mr Jack Ashley, the Labour MP for Stoke-on-Trent South, is pressing health ministers to reveal the CSM documents.

# Charity is pressed over running costs

By David Hencke, Social Services Correspondent

The Charity Commission is querying the accounts of a charity for the elderly which in its first year has spent over 75 per cent of donations on running costs.

Aged in Distress, set up in 1983 by four former senior staff of the charity, Age Concern, has attracted the attention of the Charity Commissioners by giving only £18,000 to the elderly out of an income of £147,791.

The accounts show that over £71,000 was spent on printing, direct mail, and advertising to attract £142,000 donations. Another £24,000 was spent running a lottery which yielded £5,182 profit. Another £42,000 went on research, information, consultancy, salaries and administrative expenses.

A total of £16,577 had been banked at the end of the first year, and £18,000 given in donations.

The charity was started in May 1983 by four former staff who left after disagreeing about the running of Age Concern.

The trustees are Mr Brian St. Clair-Burke, former assistant director of external services; Lady Sheila Luckock, former head of promotions; Mr Richard Harris, former chief fund-raiser, who has worked for Shelter and Mind; and Miss Brenda Donovan, former head of publishing, who has worked for IPC and the Financial Times.

The charity seeks to raise money by sending personal letters to prospective donors signed by Mrs Mollie Warner, the widow of the actor Jack Warner. It does not run services of its own and operates from a modest office above shops in Morden in the London borough of Merton. None of the trustees receives any money for their part-time work.

Aged in Distress has given grants to nine hospices. It also gives individual grants towards minibuses, telephone installations, wheelchairs, emergency heating, and advice on sheltered housing.

Mr St. Clair-Burke, chairman of the trustees said yesterday that the charity's first year accounts were honest and hid nothing, "unlike the presentation by some charities."

"I can assure you that in the current year we shall be giving a substantially higher proportion in grants out of an expected income of about £160,000. In addition, our lottery has a target of £25,000 a year profit," he said.

Much of the high initial expenditure had gone on setting up the organisation. Hiring copywriters paying for postage and printing, and test runs of direct mailing to find which was the most successful letter had all been expensive. Other costs included travelling to yet hospices.

The charity had also spent money to acquire prospective donor lists from private organisations.

Asked whether donors had been made aware that a large proportion of their money was likely to be spent initially on setting up the charity, Mr St. Clair-Burke said: "No. I am afraid people might not have donated a penny under these circumstances. It is rather unfair, because many charities spend much more than us, but it is not always clear in their accounts."

The Charity Commission said yesterday that their original inquiries into Aged in Distress had followed a routine check of the accounts of new charities. They had written asking the charity to explain its accounts, and received a reply. They were now planning to ask further questions.

# Ridley blocks solution on Severn Bridge tolls

By a Correspondent

The Transport Secretary, Mr Nicholas Ridley, is blocking a compromise solution to the Severn Bridge tolls dispute, according to a Department of Transport leak.

The unpublished inquiry report into toll rises on the England-to-Wales crossing, has been with the department since November. It is understood to recommend a compromise between the 150 per cent price rise which the Government wants, and the scrapping of tolls or, at worst, a freeze on existing tolls, for which protesters have been pressing.

Mr Walter Wood, the inquiry inspector, is understood to have recommended a 10p rise for cars and lorries, lifting prices to 30p and 50p respectively.

Sources within the department say that the Transport Minister, Mrs Lynda Chalker, is prepared to accept the solution but Mr Ridley is holding out for the full amount.

Nicholas Ridley wants 150 per cent increase

It is understood that the matter will be discussed by the Cabinet in the next week or so, and that an official statement from the Secretary of State will be made in three weeks.

# Band Aid, minus VAT

THE GOVERNMENT has rejected a proposal to waive VAT on the Band Aid record. Dr. The World, which has raised an estimated \$8 million for Ethiopian famine relief.

In a letter yesterday to Mr David Alton, the Liberal MP, Mr. Barney Hayhoe, the Treasury Minister, wrote: "The conclusion reached is that such 'one-off' treatment would not be appropriate."

"Many" charities raise funds by selling goods such as Christmas cards, or by putting on concerts or dinners.

"How, in fairness, could the Government allocate VAT raised on this particular record to the fund-raising cause, but refuse it in all other cases?"

The Post Office and its workers are giving their services free to the Ethiopian cause. Postal staff will deliver Save the Children Fund appeal leaflets to 20 million addresses in February and postal charges are being waived for people sending donations.

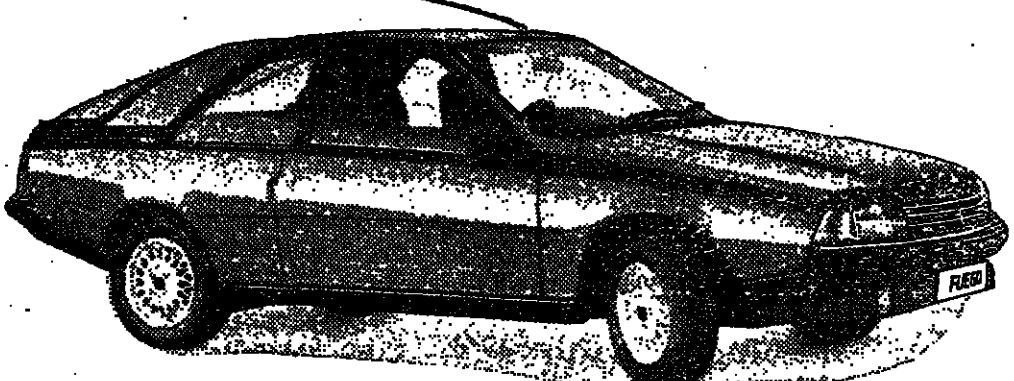
# COME DOWN BEFORE THEY GO UP



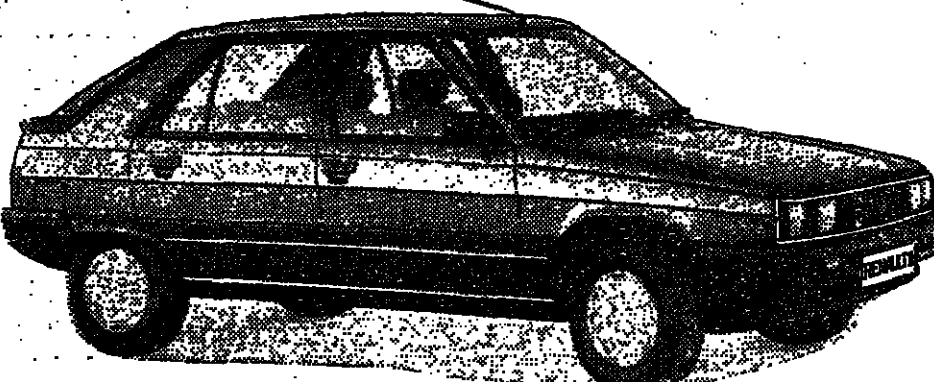
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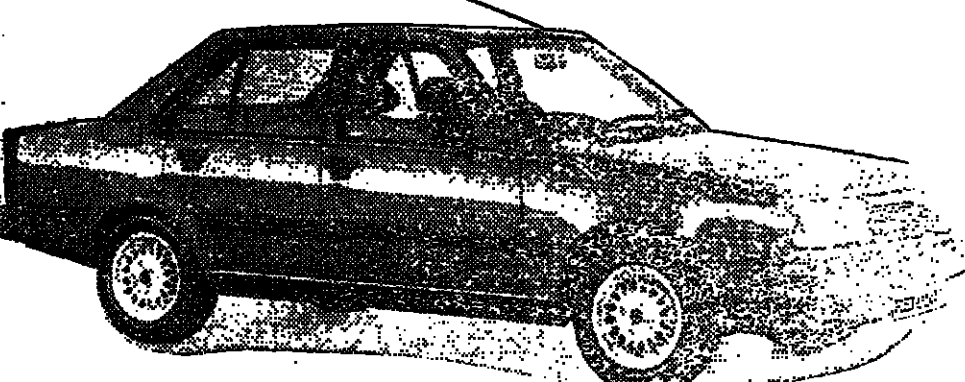
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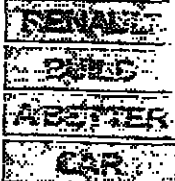
RENAULT 11



RENAULT 15

On February 4th, Renault cars and vans will be going up by an average of 3.5%. It isn't a lot. Just enough in fact to maintain our excellent quality of workmanship. If you've been considering one of the Renault range you'd be well advised to take delivery before the deadline.

Further inducements, if required, are the remarkably flexible finance schemes available until January 31st on any new Renault 5 Le Car 2, Renault 9 or Renault 11. To own a super new Renault at today's price come down to your Renault dealer soon. If not sooner.



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## Lawyers clash over seizure of funds

From Joe Joyce in Dublin

The High Court in Dublin was asked yesterday to grant control over some £2.5 million of National Union of Mineworkers' funds to sequestrators and a receiver appointed by the High Court in London to take over the union's funds.

They have been frozen by the Irish High Court in an account in the Bank of Ireland Finance Company, pending the hearing which opened yesterday.

Central issues in the action which is brought by the sequestrators and Mr Michael Arnold, the receiver, are whether the relevant English court orders should apply to the money in the Irish bank account.

Opening the case for the sequestrators against the NUM and Bank of Ireland Finance, Mr Niall Fennelly said that the union's defence raised two issues: that the English court orders could not affect funds outside the United Kingdom, and that the enforcement of those orders would be penal.

The court would hear evidence, he said, that a fine for contempt of court of £200,000 against the union had been paid. Therefore, any order made by the Irish court would be civil and not penal and would not be enforcing a fine.

Earlier, Mr Paul Carney, senior counsel for the NUM, complained that the courts in Ireland or England had been misled over the appointment of the receiver.

In December, the Irish High Court deferred hearing the case by the sequestrators because of the receiver's appointment after being told that the sequestrators and the receiver were acting independently.

At the same time, he said, English courts were being told that a receiver was required to assist the sequestrators' case in Ireland.

Mr Peter Shanley, counsel for the receiver, denied that the court had been misled; the charge was based on a misunderstanding. Once appointed, the receiver was an officer of the court and must act independently.

Mr Justice Barrington said that he had understood the receiver and the sequestrators were acting independently when he granted the adjournment in December.

The hearing was adjourned. **Malcolm Pitters adds:** Coal production is due to start at Kiveton Park colliery, South Yorkshire, today — the seventh pit in the county producing coal.

The National Coal Board said yesterday that 502 men were now working at the colliery along with 48 deputies. Two more miners returned there yesterday along with another 38 throughout Yorkshire. The board claims that 5,526 men are working in Yorkshire.

The board says coal is also being produced at Manton, Donby Grange, Emley Moor, Kellingley, Wistow, and Bickall.

## Nacods rethinks pit deal

John Ardill and Patrick Wintour report on the fears of deputies' union leaders

Leaders of Nacods, the pit deputies' union, will today consider action to defend the agreement with the coal board which ended the threat of a national strike by its 18,000 members in October. The national executive will also announce the result of its ballot on the board's 5.2 per cent pay offer.

Some Nacods area leaders believe the strike threat must be revived if the Government does not give new written assurances that it will abide by the letter and spirit of the October agreement.

Mr Tom Richardson, the Cannock Chase area secretary, said last night: "If the Government breaks that agreement, we have got an 82 per cent strike mandate." A revised colliery review procedure with independent appeals machinery was set up under the deal.

Nacods leaders believe that the National Coal Board is trying to snapper the agreement by demanding that the National Union of Mineworkers accepts closure of uneconomic pits.

Mr Joe Benham, Durham area secretary, said: "It's apparent to us from the statements of Mrs Thatcher that the Government is planning to

close uneconomic units regardless of what the unions and the management may say. "It would seem our struggle to achieve something through the independent appeal procedure appears to be abortive. The Government is going to tell the board to ignore the findings of the appeals body."

The Government and coal amounted to acceptance by Nacods of pit closures on economic grounds, particularly since it referred to five-year plans "reflecting both market and production opportunities."

Nacods does not agree with the NUM interpretation. Mr Peter McNestry, general secretary of Nacods, says it is committed to opposing economic

negotiations with the board last year to prevent covert action by management in running down pits to the point where closure became inevitable.

Mr McNestry says: "Pits have gone through the review procedure for years and no matter what anyone says they have gone because they were costing £140 or £180 a tonne to produce coal and could not afford the money to get at new areas of coal. The technical reason may have been reserves but it was all bound up with money."

"We are not accepting any different criteria from what was there before but the procedure itself needs to be altered. Pits like Cranton were being run down two or three years before being closed. So apart from an appeal procedure we wanted an early warning system so that the people at the pit could appeal for capital to make a pit productive again."

It received such a guarantee. But that was the clause which Mr James Cowan, deputy chairman of the NCB, and the chairman, Mr Ian MacGregor, did not want. Mr McNestry says: "That was the one there was an argument about because they said it would affect their right to manage."

A NEW appeal for miners' families to follow on from the Christmas appeal was launched yesterday in London by a group called Women Against Pit Closures, writes Paul Brown.

Mr Michael Miodowcroft, Liberal MP for Leeds West, said the level of deprivation forced on striking miners by the current policies was not acceptable in a civilised society.

The appeal will continue whether the strike ends soon or not. The women said that it would take years for families to pay off their debts. The Christmas appeal raised £400,000.

Among those supporting the appeal are pop stars Sting of the Police, Ian Dury, and Frankie Goes to Hollywood.

board have claimed repeatedly that the Nacods' agreement provides a basis for a settlement of the NUM dispute. This view is shared by others who say that it would allow the unions and independent experts hearing an appeal to question the board's economic arguments and accounting procedures.

The NUM denounced the agreement, saying that it

closure and argues that if the NUM accepts the principle of economic closures, the Nacods agreement would be undermined.

Mr McNestry says there is a slim line between defining a closure on economic or technical grounds since a high-cost pit can be starved of capital and run down where it is impossible to develop reserves.

Nacods was concerned in its

## Water blast inquiry clears authority

By James Lewis

Nobody is held to blame by the Health and Safety Executive for a methane gas explosion which killed 18 people and injured 30 at the Abbeystead water plant in Lancashire last May.

A report of the executive's investigation into the disaster, is due to be published next week. But its findings, leaked yesterday in the professional press, admitted by the executive to be essentially correct.

The £68 million plant is run by the North-west water authority and was designed by the engineering consultants Binnie and Partners.

The authority and the designers are cleared of any blame by the executive's inspectors, who conclude that no new legislation is required to prevent a similar tragedy occurring in the future.

The report, which is now being studied by Mr Tom King, the Employment Secretary, recommends that there should be tighter controls over the operation of such plants, including better ventilation and monitoring for the presence of gas.

In 1978 the National Water Council (since disbanded) recommended that water authorities should ensure that boreholes and water tunnels over six feet in diameter were adequately ventilated and monitored for gas.

The inquiry on the Abbeystead victims was told that monitoring was not carried out by the North-west authority, which said it had no reason to suspect the presence of methane in the four-mile tunnel carrying water between the rivers Lune and Wyre.

The engineer comments: "The HSE has ignored the evidence that Abbeystead should not have happened in the first place. The evidence did point specifically to shortcomings in the recording and recalling of accidents and disasters from the past."

The water authority declined yesterday to comment on a report which it said it had not received but welcomed its conclusions which appeared to be true.

It added: "No report could wipe out the appalling injuries and loss of life and grief that will always remain within the authority."

The authority is now engaged in an extensive programme of work on the source and extent of methane in the vicinity.

The National Union of Public Employees, to which most water workers belong, said it was not satisfied by the investigation. Mr John Dempsey, the union secretary, called for a public inquiry.

More than 18 families have so far taken legal action against the authority.

A solicitor representing several of them said: "It would seem that from now on it is going to be an uphill struggle. We were hoping the findings would show that there had been a breach of the water board's duty of care."

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## Government 'links' with working miners

Legal actions brought by the working miners were part of a campaign "sponsored" by the Government and the National Coal Board designed to "weaken and destroy" the pit strike and the NUM, a solicitor claimed in the High Court in London yesterday.

Mr Michael Seifert, senior partner in the London firm which acts for the National Union of Mineworkers, made the claim in a sworn statement read to Mr Justice Scott by Mr John Hendy.

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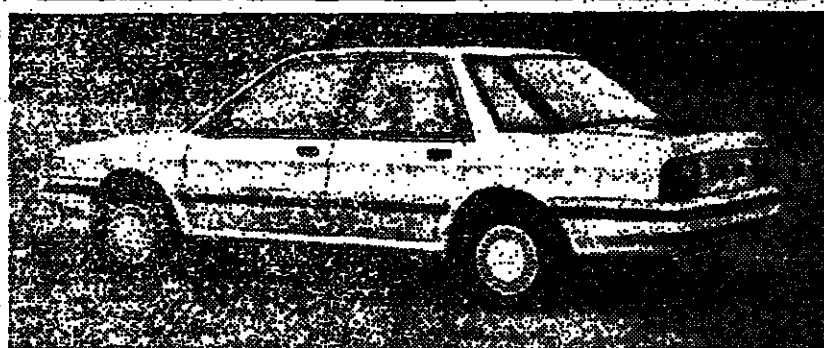
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ONE OF Austin Rover's most encouraging recent cars, the Montego poses a potent threat to Ford and GM in the middle-weight ranks. The Montego's strength lies in its being such an accomplished all-rounder. The 1.6 L that saw off Ford's Sierra, Vauxhall's Cavalier and Toyota's Carina in a Group Test confrontation earlier this year doubled up: very respectable performance and economy with good refinement, secure well-balanced handling, a fine ride, a slick gearchange and outstanding interior space. Add to that conventional good looks and a high standard of interior appointment for the price, and it's not hard to see why the Austin makes such an effective package.....

MOTOR 22nd December 1984

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Show of unity as new headquarters opened

## Democrats ponder choice of chairman to challenge Reagan

From Michael White in Washington

Senior Democrats yesterday bickered aside their differences and braved a fresh snowfall to attend the dedication of the first national headquarters of the party.

The new headquarters — the Democrats have had one nearby for years — was being taken by some as an earnest of the party's determination to pull itself together and start challenging President Reagan again.

But, more immediately at issue for the 378 members of the Democratic National Committee, meeting in a suburban hotel here for three days, is the election of a new chairman.

Other potentially divisive issues on the agenda have been arcane, but important matters such as the attempt to reduce the power of the DNC's special interest caucuses, including blacks, Hispanics, business and professional, gays, Asian-Pacific, and the rest. All held private sessions yesterday.

A Fairness Commission will

be appointed to re-examine the nominating rules for the 1988 presidential race.

Although the newspapers have been full of Whittaker Chambers' articles since Mr Walter Mondale's crushing defeat at the hands of the President last November, underlying issues of principles, policy and strategy have been subsumed in the chairmanship fight.

Some friendly party critics have remarked that the world recession and Reaganite ascendancy have immobilised the party and its Keynesian New Deal outlook to such an extent that a new chairman will make no difference to the Democrats' immediate prospects.

But the fight is on, and after the four surviving candidates had made their speeches late yesterday, the winner will be picked this morning. The betting remains on Mr Paul Kirk to succeed Mr Charles Manatt, the chairman whom Mr Mondale ineffectually tried to dump last summer.

Mr Kirk is a close lieutenant of Senator Edward Kennedy, a mixed blessing for both Mr Kirk and the Democrats since the Senator is regarded as "a polarising figure."

Since Mr Reagan's landslide, many promising candidates reportedly declined to run. But rather than have Mr Kirk and, by implication, the Kennedy machine in charge, other candidates were drafted. The ex-California chairman Nancy Pelosi, backed by Mr Manatt, but the Ferraro experience has frightened off union leaders — still a powerful force — and they are lobbying hard for Mr Kirk.

The other two candidates are Mr Perry Sanford, ex-governor of North Carolina, and a former Carter aide, Mr Robert Keefe of Indiana. Mr Sanford is a conservative with majority southern support.

Mr Kirk's supporters won some procedural victories among the caucus junkies as one delegate called the faction fighters on Wednesday and looked like winning. This will be seen as a victory for Senator Kennedy.

The presidential trouble-shooter and one-time spy-master, General Vernon Walters, is expected to be nominated to succeed Mrs Jeane Kirkpatrick, who is ending her sometimes stormy tenure as US ambassador to the UN.



The Pope waves to crowds in Quito, Ecuador, while an armed guard in ceremonial uniform looks on

## Pope travels to the home of liberation theology

From Michael Reid in Lima

THE Pope arrives in Peru today to start the longest and most challenging leg of his sixth Latin American tour.

His arrival has been awaited with fervour in this overwhelmingly Roman Catholic country. Crowds of up to two million people are expected at some of the events during his five day stay.

The Pope's arrival marks a breathing space in the campaign for April general elections in which Peru appears set to move to the left. The Church has been stressing that the visit is intended to be strictly pastoral but it will provide ammunition for both sides in a debate about liberation theology that has divided the Peruvian Church.

Peru is the birthplace of the theological current that has swept Latin America and which has linked Christian commitment to the poor with demands for social change.

For the past two years the Vatican has unsuccessfully tried to coax the Peruvian bishops into condemning the writings of Father Gustavo Gutierrez, a 56-year-old Lima parish priest and theology lecturer.

second Vatican Council and in the Option, for the Poor embraced by the Latin American bishops at their 1983 conference in Medellin.

"For some people, talking about poverty, destitution, and institutionalised violence means talking in terms of Marxism. I think they're people who have a more favourable idea of Marxism than I have, because every time one talks about justice,

However, Father Gutierrez has been careful in setting boundaries between pastoral concerns and political action. He firmly rejected overtures from the Marxist-orientated Izquierda Unida coalition to stand as a candidate in the election.

Father Gutierrez's ideas have as many opponents as they do supporters in the Peruvian hierarchy. After a summons to Rome in September, the country's bishops eventually agreed a document which backed many aspects of the priest's position.

The statement acknowledges that the poor need a quota of power to defend their interests, and is nuanced in its criticisms of liberation theology, according to Mr David Molyneux of Noticias Aliadas, an ecumenical news service here. However, the document also reflected conservative concerns with measures to increase the bishops' control over church educational activities.

The Rome meeting was intended "to clear the air" before the Pope's arrival in Peru, according to Mr Molyneux. This means that the Pope is unlikely to enter into the details of liberation theology while here.

However, he is expected to attack Marxism, and his visit is "more likely to strengthen the right than the left" in the Peruvian Church and may influence the elections, Mr Molyneux said.

POLICE in Lima arrested 2,600 people yesterday as part of a security drive prior to the Pope's arrival. Men accused of "suspicious acts" and 500 alleged prostitutes were among those held.—AP.

they say one is a Marxist," Father Gutierrez said in an interview.

Supporters of liberation theology in Peru say that it has brought the Church closer to contemporary social realities. Peru has suffered more than most of the 1980s. Deep and widening social inequalities have fuelled a spiral of political violence and allegations of human rights violations on a scale unprecedented in the country's modern history.

Father Gutierrez argues that the Church should be helping the poor to achieve a radical transformation of their situation, a situation which he sees as "contrary to the will of God."

## Senior ETA leader seized in French raid on terror base

Bayonne: French police said yesterday that they had uncovered the main base of ETA: the outlawed Spanish Basque separatist guerrilla group.

It was described as ETA's nerve centre and contained a large amount of arms and explosives, false papers, intelligence information on French installations in Spain and a list of high-ranking Spaniards.

Eight people were arrested including Juan Lorenzo Lasa Mikelena, aged 29, said by Spanish police to be the deputy leader of ETA. An international arrest warrant was issued in 1983 by Interpol, at Spain's request, for Mikelena.

Spanish police said the ETA leader, known by the Basque spelling of his name — as Mikelena, was wanted in connection with guerrilla attacks in which at least 14 people had died.

French spokesman said police raided the ETA centre,

a villa in the village of Anglet, near this south-eastern French town, on Wednesday and uncovered an arms cache which included a grenade-making machine, explosives, 3,000 yards of fuse, five carbines, four pistols, and a Soviet RPG-7 rocket-propelled grenade.

Police said the raid followed a high-level meeting in Paris on Tuesday involving the Interior Minister Mr Pierre Joxe, the Defence Minister, Mr Charles Hernu, and the Prime Minister, Mr Laurent Fabius.—Reuter.

Jane Walker adds from Madrid: The Spanish Foreign Minister, Mr Jose Barrionuevo, yesterday sent a message of appreciation and congratulation to his French counterpart for the detention of Mikelena. Mr Barrionuevo "thanked the French police 'most sincerely' for their collaboration in preventing people resident in France from committing criminal acts in Spain."

## 'Betrayal' by EEC

A senior executive who revealed to the European Commission a drug company's illegal trade practices, spoke yesterday of his betrayal by the Common Market.

Mr Stanley Adams told the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg that he was incredulous that his "friends" in the Brussels Commission had disclosed his identity to the "enemy" — his own employers, the drugs manufacturer, Hoffman-La Roche.

Mr Adams, of Thames Ditton, Surrey, who was jailed an industrial spy in Switzerland 10 years ago, is suing the Commission for £500,000 compensation, including £250,000 for psychological and moral damage plus 10 years' loss of earnings.

The former £32,000-a-year manager at Roche's headquarters in Basle claims his life was ruined when the truth came out about his involvement in efforts to stop the company's illegal price-fixing and market share "carve-ups."

Roche was eventually fined more than £280,000 for breaching Common Market fair trade rules. But Mr Adams, now aged 57, has alleged the Commission failed to protect him by showing documents to Roche which enabled the firm to identify him as the source and invoke Switzerland's commercial secrecy laws against him.

## Plea for leniency

TORUN: Lawyers for a secret police captain and two lieutenants accused of killing a pro-independence priest said yesterday that the sentences demanded by the prosecution were too harsh because their clients were innocent of premeditated murder.

The judge adjourned the trial until Tuesday after the lawyer for a fourth secret police officer failed in the courtroom shortly before she was to begin her final arguments.

Mrs Barbara Marcink is one of two lawyers defending Col. Adam Pietruszka, who is charged with instigating the kidnapping and killing of Father Jerzy Popieluszko.

The unexpected development is likely to delay the verdict in the 24-day-old trial until at least the end of next week.

Mr Janusz Hlaza, defending Capt. Grzegorz Piotrowski, said that his client should not receive the death penalty and denied earlier suggestions by a Roman Catholic lawyer that the killing of the priest was instigated outside Poland.

Lawyers for Lieut. Waldemar Chmielewski and Lieut. Leszek Pekala said that their clients should receive reduced sentences because they never intended to kill Popieluszko and acted under the influence of their immediate superiors.—AP.

## Carrington voices Star Wars doubts

The Secretary General of Nato, Lord Carrington, yesterday voiced doubts about space-based defence against missiles envisaged in President Reagan's Star Wars initiative but said research could not be limited.

In a lecture at Churchill College, Cambridge, he said the theory of a strategic defence that could enhance US and allied security needed to be tested but the case remained to be proved.

"It will at the very least be extremely difficult to devise a system of strategic defence which meets these objectives of balance, no superiority and enhanced deterrence," he said. While constraints could be negotiated on the testing and deployment of anti-ballistic missile systems, "I do not see how one could have a sufficient degree of confidence in

an agreement which sought to prevent research."

He praised last month's agreement between Mr Reagan and Mrs Thatcher, that any deployments of Star Wars systems would have to be negotiated with the Soviet Union.

Washington insists that Mr Reagan's Strategic Defence Initiative is only a research programme.

Lord Carrington said last week that the US would be imprudent not to conduct such research given Soviet activity in this field.

He welcomed yesterday the recent visit to Britain by the senior Soviet Politburo member, Mr Mikhail Gorbachev, but criticised "the mixture of unrealistic relief and unrealistic expectations" which he said the East-West thaw had raised.—Reuter.

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If there is anything further you wish to know about the plan our lines are open each weekday evening until 8 o'clock. Experienced staff will be happy to help. Just call us on:  
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before this. So, after 2 years your policy can be surrendered for cash, although this value will be low in the early years. A far better alternative however is to apply for a loan which is based on the surrender value. This gives you immediate cash. So you can still look forward to your final lump sum.

### SEND US YOUR APPLICATION NOW!!

So if you're between 18 and 80 Moneymaker Plus is the plan for you. And the benefits start as soon as we receive your application. Just tell us the amount you wish to save each month, (between £10 and £100). During this special offer period we'll guarantee to accept you if you are under age 80, and can truthfully answer "NO" to four simple questions. We don't normally ask for a medical examination.

Naturally you must disclose all facts that are likely to influence the assessment and acceptance of your application. So if you're in doubt as to whether or not any detail is relevant you should disclose it. Otherwise your benefits could be affected.

So send off for the plan today. Discover what peace of mind could mean with Moneymaker Plus.

Please tell me how much I could stand to gain.

Your way to profit and protection. Please send me a FREE Personal Illustration. We Promise... No Obligation... No Salesman Will Call.

1. Surname \_\_\_\_\_  
Forenames (in full) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Postcode \_\_\_\_\_  
Age \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Broker/Agent, if any \_\_\_\_\_

2. Tick the amount you wish to invest each month:  
☐ £100 (max) ☐ £75 ☐ £50 ☐ £30 ☐ £20 ☐ £10 (min)

3. Answer "YES" or "NO" to each question below:  
If you are under 80 and can truthfully say "NO" to the 4 questions, you are guaranteed to be accepted with no further questions or medical examination. If you answer "YES" to any question, please attach details. You may still be accepted.

(a) Have you any reason to believe you are not in good health? ☐ YES ☐ NO  
(b) Are you receiving, or have you received within the last twelve months, any medical treatment? ☐ YES ☐ NO  
(c) Do you participate in any hazardous occupation or activity (such as private aviation or deep-sea diving)? ☐ YES ☐ NO  
(d) Has a proposal on your life been declined, postponed, or accepted on special terms by any life insurance company? ☐ YES ☐ NO

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## No shift in US arms policy

From Michael White in Washington

THE STATE Department moved swiftly yesterday to play down suggestions attributed to its senior officials responsible for Middle East affairs that a temporary halt to all arms sales in the region, pending a comprehensive policy review, might lead to a shift of policy.

A statement from the department confirmed that such an examination of US security policy in the Middle East was in hand, as suggested in congressional testimony by the Assistant Secretary, Mr Richard Murphy, on Wednesday. The purpose was to achieve "a refined overview of the situation, but not a fundamental change of policy" was expected.

Sensitivity on the issue is evident here because of the pressing and imminent need for military supplies of the US's two most important allies in the region, Israel and Saudi Arabia. President Reagan met Israel's Defence Minister, Mr Yitzhak Rabin, at the White House this week, and later it was announced that the Administration would ask Congress for \$1.8 billion in military aid for Israel in 1988 — \$400 million more than provided this year.

Even more potentially delicate is the first Saudi royal visit to Washington since 1977, to be made by King Fahd on February 11. The Saudis are hoping to buy billions of dollars worth of military hardware, including 40 F-15 fighters and possibly A-7C reconnaissance aircraft. The Defence Department reportedly hopes to attach the deal then and present it to Congress soon after.

Although Washington's prime motive is to secure Saudi Arabia against a resurgent Iran, the policy is also a lobby in Congress will resist such a deal. Yesterday's New York Times, which reported the Middle East arms moratorium on its front page, attributed the move to support for Israel among top officials, including the Secretary of State, Mr George Shultz.

The Times story placed the review firmly in the context of Israeli sensitivities, but other dimensions, including the wisdom of such large sales to the Saudis and to other Arab States, were also in mind.

Some US officials as well as congressmen believe that it will destabilise the region rather than the reverse. A bipartisan group of senators this week warned President Reagan against a "premature commitment".

Yesterday's State Department statement said: "We are considering details of possible sale of the contents and timing of which have yet to be decided. As the timing and necessary notifications of the sale to Congress has yet to be decided there is no deferral. All of this would appear to indicate tensions among the Pentagon, the State Department, and Congress, with the Pentagon keenest to sell soonest."

## Iraq claims new drive

BAHRAIN: Iraq and Iran gave conflicting reports yesterday of a fresh Iraqi attack on the central front, the second drive in four days against Iranian positions.

An Iraqi field commander told Baghdad radio that his troops seized several Iranian positions in two hours of fierce fighting, but Iran described the action as a limited attack which failed to take any ground.

An officer at Iran's joint staff headquarters in Tehran said that earlier yesterday there had been no fresh Iraqi attack since a dawn offensive on Monday in the southern sector.

But the official Iranian agency, Irna, last night said that there was a limited Iraqi attack yesterday in the Chappa Hammak region of Basrah province, which caused the Iraqis heavy casualties and failed to take any ground.

Baghdad television last night screened interviews with dozens of Iraqis who said they were captured in yesterday's attack. — Reuters.

## Israel denies torture claim

Tel Aviv: Israeli military sources yesterday rejected allegations by the International Commission of Jurists that the Israeli army tortured young Arabs in a prison camp at Al-Fara'a in the occupied West Bank.

The Geneva-based commission, a private organisation dedicated to promoting the rule of law, earlier this week published a report by Palestinian lawyers quoting 20 former detainees as saying in statements that they were subjected to brutal physical and mental punishment. They were also denied medical care, adequate food and hygiene facilities, the lawyers said. — Reuters.

## Aid officials warn of declining living standards in Africa

## UK shuns World Bank fund for development

Paris: Britain, West Germany and Japan told World Bank delegates yesterday that they will not contribute to a proposed fund for economic rehabilitation and development in Africa.

Official hopes for the size of the fund have now shrunk from the original target of \$2 billion to around \$600 million. The result, aid officials said, could be a continuing decline in African living standards.

The US had earlier ruled itself out of the fund. Five leading industrial countries were asked to give at least \$150m each to the fund, but only one, France, has agreed to contribute, promising around \$165m.

Aid officials said that the World Bank may contribute some of its own resources to carry the fund to the \$600m mark.

The fund, due to operate for three years starting this year, Alex Brummer, page 9

is likely to fall well short of the \$1.2 billion the bank was recently aiming at and the \$2b it wanted originally.

Britain, West Germany and Japan disclosed their decision to contribute to 20 other countries meeting in Paris to discuss the proposed fund, officials said.

The officials said, however, that non-participating countries might contribute indirectly through co-financing arrangements, and Japan appeared the "least negative" of them.

Any World Bank contribution to the fund, the Special Assistance Facility for Sub-Saharan Africa, will depend on the bank's Reconstruction and Development, the officials said.

The approval of the World Bank's members will also be required. Without outside assistance, per capita income could fall even more, with as much as 60 per cent of Africa's population living in absolute poverty by the year 2000, a World Bank statement said.

There is also concern about the continent's growing debt, now estimated at around \$150b. In Kassala, aid officials said yesterday that more than 3,000 Ethiopians a day were pouring into Sudan to seek food and to

escape the Ethiopian army, bringing refugee camps close to catastrophic famine.

Only an emergency UN airlift, which began on January 20 and is due to end in about 10 days, has prevented mass starvation, relief workers said.

The surge of refugees, which began in September and accelerated rapidly in December, is expected to raise the number of Ethiopians in Sudanese camps to around 600,000 by April from 130,000 last September. No local food supplies are available.

"Before the airlift we faced absolute catastrophe. There was almost no food. If the airlift stops, we'll face catastrophe again," said the chief Swiss Red Cross doctor at Wad Sharfieh Camp, Dr Martin Weber.

Wad Sharfieh, and Wad Kowli to the south, have become the main reception camps and now hold 150,000 refugees compared to 17,000 in September.

In Nairobi the US yesterday agreed to donate 120,000 tons of corn to Kenya, which is suffering drought-related food shortages. The US embassy said that was the largest American food grant ever to Kenya.

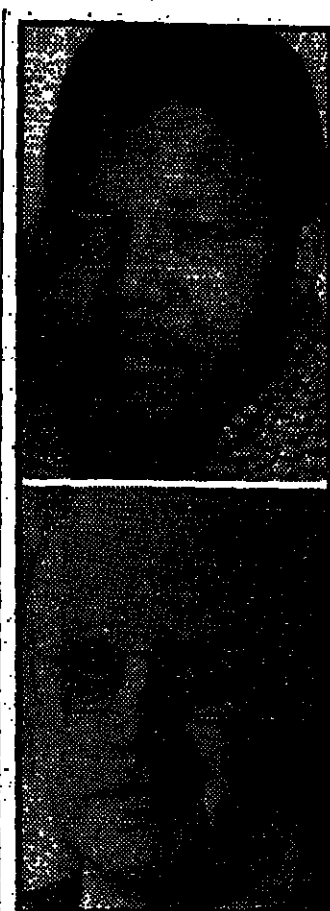
Kenyan officials, who have refused to discuss the extent of the drought, maintain that unlike neighbouring Ethiopia, no one has died yet of famine in Kenya.

Earlier this week the PAO said that Kenya's 1984 crop was hit by the worst drought in 50 years, causing a 33 per cent drop in production. 1984-85 requirements for 1984-85 are estimated at 900,000 tons.

The US embassy said in a statement that one-third of the grain will be sold by the state cereal board to defray transport, bagging and storage costs. Two-thirds will be distributed in drought-hit areas of the country.

"I am pleased to sign this grant for food aid which will help alleviate shortages caused by the recent drought in Kenya," the US ambassador, Mr Gerald Thomas, said.

This latest grant, brought US government assistance to Kenya since mid-1984 to nearly \$100 million in food aid, 200,000 tons has been committed, the statement said. — Reuters/AP.



## Swazi Foreign Minister defends links with SA

From Joseph Haxton in Mbabane, Swaziland

Swaziland has no choice but to cooperate with South Africa, Foreign Minister Prince Bhekimpoti Dlamini told the fifth annual meeting of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference, the economic association of the nine majority-ruled states of the region.

Prince Bhekimpoti was responding to criticism of Swaziland over its links with South Africa. The chairman of the SADC Council of Ministers, Vice-President Peter Mmusi of Botswana, warned Swaziland that the failure of the Nkomati and Lusaka accords meant that once again the South African Government has shown a lack of honesty in international relations which makes us wary of its professions of good intent.

Mr Mmusi noted that, despite the accords, part of Angola is still occupied by South African forces, while bandits in Mozambique still receive regular supplies organised within South Africa.

Prince Bhekimpoti signed a pact with Maputo and Luanda by which each signatory promised to discontinue support for rebels in the other's country.

SADC members and officials are highly critical of increasing Swazi ties with South Africa, which include the signing of a non-aggression pact two years ago and the opening of a South African trade mission here at the beginning of this month.

The South African head of the mission has diplomatic status and was invited with other diplomats to the Swazi government reception for SADC last night. This is the first new South African diplomatic mission in a black African state in 19 years.

Far from playing down his links with South Africa, Prince Bhekimpoti made clear to Mr Mmusi that Swaziland sees its links with South Africa as being at least as important as those with the SADC.

Swaziland still hoped to negotiate a widely-criticised deal with South Africa under which parts of two bantustans and nearly a million people would be transferred from South Africa to Swaziland — a deal which is anathema to the SADC and the OAU.

Speaking for the Nordic countries, the Swedish Under-Secretary of State, Mr Gösta Edgren, said that contact with South Africa "may be necessary for geographical reasons," but that care had to be taken that such links did not "break the isolation of the apartheid regime."

Mbabane has also been hosting a South African golf tournament which has meant that South African businessmen and golfers are rubbing shoulders with SADC delegates.

## Botha makes a renewed offer to free Mandela

From Philip van Niekerk in Johannesburg

President Botha yesterday offered to release South African political prisoner Mr Nelson Mandela, on condition that he renounces violence.

The new factors in Mr Botha's offer appeared to be that it was made by the President in Parliament, and that a requirement included in previous government offers to Mr Mandela — that he live in the homeland of Transkei if released — was omitted. Mr Mandela has rejected the residence requirement.

Judging by the reaction to the offer yesterday from black leaders and Mr Mandela's lawyer, Mr Ismael Ayoob, there seems little chance that the African National Congress leadership will accept the residence requirement.

Mr Botha told Parliament in Cape Town that the Government was prepared to consider Mr Mandela's release, provided

he committed himself not to plan, instigate, or commit acts of violence in the furtherance of political aims.

"The choice is his. All that is requested from him now is that he should unconditionally reject violence as a political instrument, a norm which is respected in all civilised countries of the world," Mr Botha said.

"I am sure that Parliament will understand that we cannot release Mr Mandela if he himself says that the moment he leaves prison he will continue with his commitment to violence."

This is the fourth offer of release made to Mr Mandela. On all previous occasions, the most recent just before Christmas, he rejected the offer, including residence in the Transkei, as he is opposed to the homelands system.

Yesterday's offer followed the renewed debate around Mr Mandela's imprisonment which was opened up by the visit to him by the British peer, Lord Bethell, and the subsequent

publication of the interview in the Mail on Sunday.

Mr Mandela's lawyer, Mr Ayoob, responded to news of the offer yesterday by quoting Mr Mandela himself, who had said in the past: "Armed struggle was forced on us by the Government, and if they want us to give it up the ball is in their court."

Mr Mandela also stated: "If the ANC is legalised and allowed to participate in the constitutional development of the country, then there is no need for violence, but the conditions which lead up to violence must be removed."

Mr Terror Lekota, publicity secretary of the anti-apartheid United Democratic Front, said that Mr Mandela was well known for his deep commitment to the programme of the ANC.

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## NEWS IN BRIEF

## Bhopal tragedy report

INDIA'S senior medical research body, conducting studies of dead Bhopal gas victims, has found "devastating" damage to lungs and secondary damage to brain, liver and kidneys, a spokesman said in New Delhi yesterday.

The India Council of Medical Research, which conducted 20 post mortems, found severe cases of pulmonary oedema — filling of the lungs with fluid — in all cases, and four cases of swelling of brain and degeneration of liver tissues.

The council has also launched 15 research projects involving more than 100 scientists and experts to study the long-term effects on survivors of the disaster on December 3 that killed at least 2,000 people and affected about 200,000 others. — AP.

## Priest beheaded

AN Italian missionary who was found dead in Madagascar early this month had been tortured and beheaded by unidentified assailants, the Roman Catholic Fides news service said in Rome yesterday. It said that despite initial police reports that Father Sergio Argenti, aged 46, had been killed in a robbery, there was evidence that he was robbed, killed, and horribly mutilated. — AP.

## Lister clear

SOUTH AFRICA yesterday dropped all charges under the country's official secrecy laws against journalist Gwen Lister, hours before she was due to appear in a Namibian court. She was arrested last month after telling reporters she had been kidnapped in a top-secret instruction to the Windhoek postmaster telling him to intercept her mail. Miss Lister is a former correspondent for the Guardian. — Reuters.

## Nude penalty

MISS FRANCE has been stripped of her title for allowing a magazine to print nude photographs of her. The beautiful contest winner, who was crowned in Paris, said Isabelle Chaudieu, aged 18, had broken international beauty pageant rules and would be replaced by her runner-up, Carole Tredici. The photographs were published in the French magazine, L'Esprit, published yesterday. — Reuters.

## Sad sisters

THIRTY-SEVEN lorry loads of rotting rubbish, dung and dead goats have been taken from the house of two elderly sisters near Kaatshuyl, Holland. Police investigating neighbours' complaints about the smell yesterday found Maria and Corrella van der Hoeven living in fifth with more than 30 neglected cows, goats, dogs and cats. A council spokesman said it would take about five days to clear the yard-deep pile of maggot-ridden rubbish and fumigate the house. — Reuters.

## School death

A MUSIC teacher has died after being beaten by a drunken 15-year-old school boy in northern Japan, police said. Nakawataru, aged 24, was the first person to die in school violence in Japan since they began keeping records. A rise in tide of violence led to police being stationed in troublesome schools two years ago. — Reuters.

## Gaol for fraud

A COUPLE who refused to return \$999,000 they were overpaid by an American bank were each jailed for 20 years in the Philippines yesterday. Melchor Javier and his wife Victoria were accused of fraud for not returning the money after the error was discovered. — Reuters.

## Surgeon sued

JACQUELINE Martinez, aged 32, is suing a surgeon who operated on her after X-rays showed that a long leg instrument had been left inside her which weighed nearly 2lb, and was 15 inches long. An examining magistrate in Nice is also investigating her case. — Reuters.

## Not welcome

THE Prime Minister of New Zealand, Mr David Lange, yesterday made clear that he would reject Washington's request for a port visit by a warship thought to be capable of carrying nuclear weapons. He said his government's formal response would be conveyed to the US Embassy today. — Reuters.

## Fast breeding

BELGIAN scientists who are breeding a new breed of pig, called the "super pig", are hoping to speed up the breeding process, hope to turn their experiment into a commercial operation. — AP.

## Future of dissident in doubt

From our Correspondent in Tokyo

An uncertain future awaits Kim Dae-Jung, South Korea's leading dissident, when he gives up his exile in the US and returns to Seoul next week.

He still has 17 years to serve of a 20-year prison sentence for sedition — he was allowed out for medical treatment — and there have been official warnings that he will be returned to gaol.

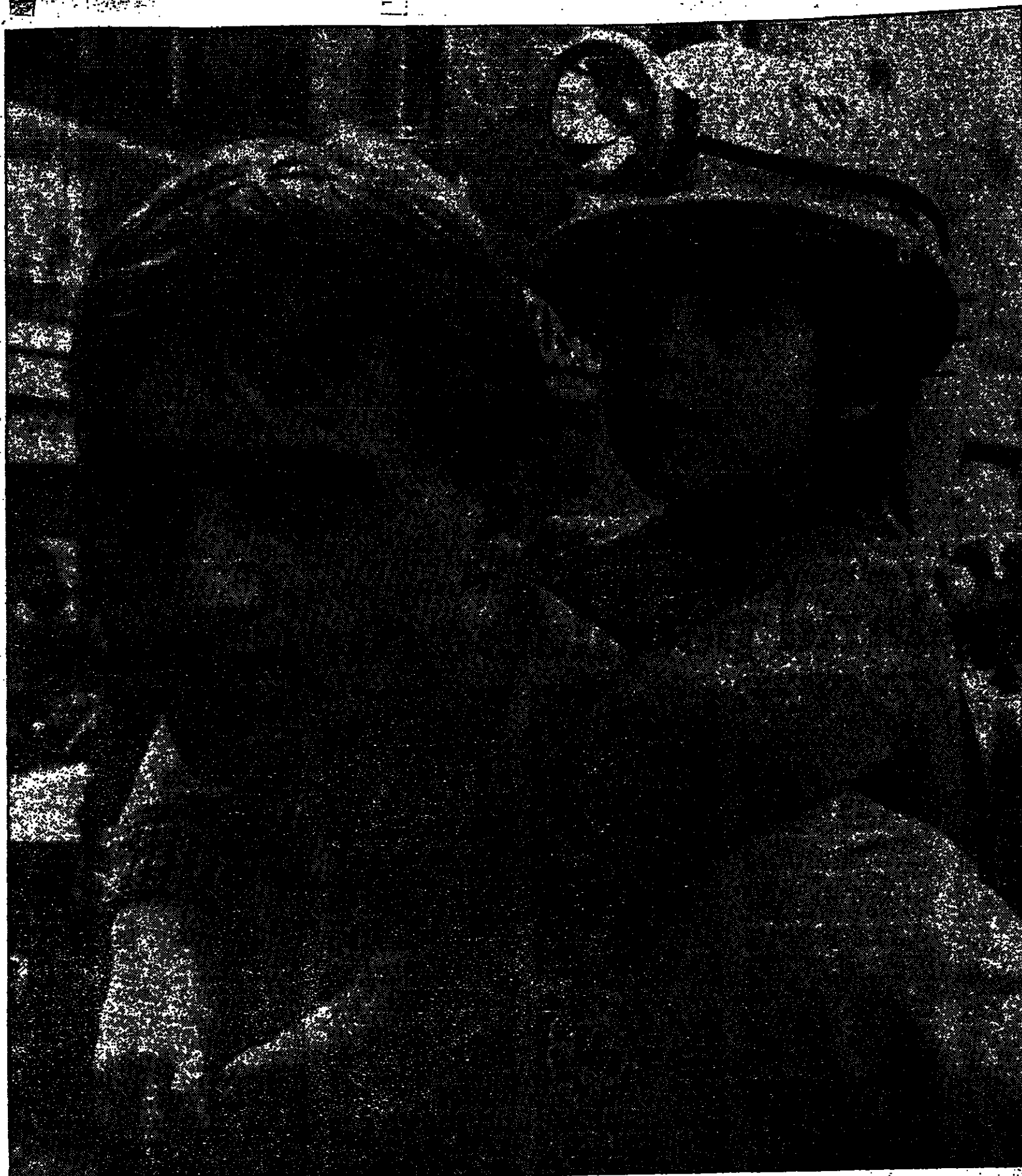
But the prospects of being locked away as soon as he lands in Seoul are slender. First, he is aware of the behind-the-scenes efforts by the Reagan Administration to persuade President Chun Doo-Hwan that such a course would be unwise.

Secondly, he will be flanked on his return by American congressmen, officials who served under Mr Carter, and a large press contingent.









Adaptation by Anwarul Karim. Photo by Stefan Cugnet (UK)

Now more than ever, the miners families deserve your help.

The strike has not ended. And whatever the outcome, the extreme hardship suffered by striking miners families is not over.

Nor is the sheer courage of the pit communities.

We'd like you to consider this simple question:

How is that many striking miners have been driven back to work, despite their deep held loyalties and principles?

This miner's letter appeared last week in the Sheffield Star:

*"I would like to apologise to all NUM members for showing up to work. I have forfeited 11 months wages for a good cause, but feel I now need some cash for my family needs."*

*I have been a diabetic for 14 years and need a special diet as I am going blind in my right eye. With not being able to afford a proper diet I am getting worse by the week.*

*Although I have gone back to work, I feel I have not broken with my union.*

*I just want to be able to see for a few more years."*

The government has spent £5 billion to drive people to this. £5 billion would cover more than 10 years subsidy to the NCB.

# DON'T DESERT THEM NOW

Every week letters come from miners families, with newborn babies and sick children who should qualify for special coal allowances.

The Coal Board has refused to give these allowances.

One NCB area manager summed up the government's attitude when he told a striking miners wife whose baby is suffering from asthma: "If you want coal, get your husband back to work".

Whole families have existed on as little as £21 per week for 11 long months.

Family savings are spent. Enormous debts have piled up.

And children have grown out of worn clothes and battered shoes.

140,000 miners are still on strike.

They should not be left alone at this time of greatest need.

We are asking you to give every pound you can muster.

And we ask you to give right now.

Many thanks to those who raised £400,000 for the Miners Families Christmas Appeal. We ask you to give generously again.

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Alex Wood (Leader,  
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The money raised from the appeal will be distributed by Women Against Pit Closures, a national organisation of women's support groups in every coal mining community. It will ensure that the money raised through the Miners Families Appeal is distributed fairly for the relief or hardship for miners families. Please let us know if you or your organisation can provide further financial or other help.

To Miners Families Appeal  
c/o 90 Fawcett Park Road, London SW15 2EA.

I/We enclose a donation of £\_\_\_\_\_ for the Miners Families Appeal.  
(Cheque/PO made out to 'Miners Families Appeal').  
To save costs, no receipt will be sent unless requested. (Tick below)  
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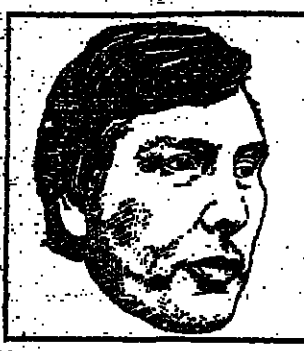
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# Lord Young's half-full glass of little cheer



Ian Aitken

PERHAPS the most human face in Mrs Thatcher's notably inhuman Cabinet is its most recent recruit, Lord Young of Grafton. Ennobled, appointed to Her Majesty's most honourable Privy Council and promoted to full Cabinet rank in a single day, the former David Young might have been entitled to just a touch of bewilderment.

He rejoices in a title which has not been heard of much recently, although it has perfectly good antecedents. He is Mrs Thatcher's Minister without Portfolio, which means he is relatively fancy-free. In effect, he is the Prime Minister's "Minister for Thought."

The late Aneurin Bevan once had a bit of fun at the expense of such peculiar political animals. Mocking the appointment of some post-war Tory grandees to just such a job, he recalled that Baldwin had once created a minister for thought. This formidable intellect, he said, had gone away to think. "He thought for six months and then he came back and resigned," added Mr Bevan.

Lord Young has now been around a little longer than that and he has not yet shown any sign of wishing to resign even though he remains unpaid for his services. The reason he is unpaid is not entirely a desire on his part to retain his amateur status, although he is, quite rich enough (from a highly successful career in business) to regard himself as a gentleman rather than a player. It is just that Mrs Thatcher's ministerial list is fully subscribed and it would need an Act of Parliament to get him a salary.

So Lord Young soldiers on unpaid and he is clearly getting a considerable kick out of his job. On Wednesday he appeared before the Commons Select Committee on Employment whose members wanted him to explain exactly what it is that he does. In fact, the committee is already on friendly terms

with Lord Young, having interviewed him before, not least in his earlier capacity as Chairman of the high-spending Manpower Services Commission.

Everyone, from the committee's left wing Labour chairman, Mr Ron Leighton, downwards, was gravely impressed by his distinguished guest. He for his part, was no less courteous in reply. Looking more like a successful farmer than a financial and political whiz-kid, he answered everything that was put to him with total assurance.

But I hope Lord Young's admirers will not be offended if I say that neither the committee nor the public audience was much the wiser at the end of the interrogation. It was clear that, in terms of thought output, he is hard at work. But the practical results were not quite so apparent.

To be sure, the minister produced some felicitous phrases and sage comments. He confirmed that he basically does what the Prime Minister tells him to do, bringing his mind to bear on problems set for him by her. And he left no doubt that, in spite of a few diversions like leading a scientific and technological trade delegation to China later this year, his main task is to think up

ways of getting more people back to work.

After his highly successful stint at the Manpower Services Commission, where he was closely identified with the youth training programme, few people would deny Lord Young's qualifications for the job. His initial appointment was welcomed not only in Conservative circles but by trade union leaders who admired his record.

I suspect, however, that some of this admiration is already beginning to wear off. For it is becoming increasingly clear that Lord Young, whatever his commitment to getting the unemployed back to work, is every bit as committed to the basic propositions of Thatcherism (or should we rename it Lawsonism) as the driest member of the Cabinet.

In other words, his remedies for a record level of unemployment, and more particularly for a record level of long term unemployment, have nothing in common with the views of those Tories who are currently clamouring for massive programmes of public investment. On the contrary, he approaches the problem from the opposite direction—namely, the provision of incentives. And those incentives

look much more like Thatcherite stick than a Keynesian carrot.

Now I have to confess that some of Lord Young's ideas on the subject strike an immediate chord with me. I cannot see any justification for paying high levels of social security benefits to out of work teenagers, let alone to university students during their vacations. There can be very little argument that such benefits are a disincentive to seek work at lower rates of pay than a full adult wage. Moreover, they waste money better spent elsewhere.

I recognise at once that low paid youngsters may actually undercut the wages of adult workers, and that there is no guarantee that a new job for a teenager may not put his father or his mother out of work. But I am equally certain that it is better for a school leaver to find a job and hold it than to go on the dole.

But on the other hand, it would be ridiculous to expect that measures of this kind can provide anything but the most pathetic palliative to the problem the country is facing. As Mr Leighton remarked on Wednesday, they amount to no more than tinkering at the margin. Lord Young has a reply to

this kind of criticism, however. He claims that a substantial part of the problem arises from the destructive pessimism of far too many politicians, academics and media commentators.

His views, which are those of a compulsive optimist, have brought a new (or relatively new) phrase into currency in Whitehall. For, as he will tell anyone who is prepared to listen, there are two totally different ways of looking at the same facts.

There are those who will persistently see the wine glass as half empty, he says, and who have their behaviour on that gloomy perception. But there are others who can see that the glass is half full, and who act with corresponding optimism.

Lord Young leaves very little doubt that he is of the latter persuasion, or that he sees the difference as crucial to Britain's long term future.

It is a comforting approach, comparable to the plying attitude of a Jehovah's Witness to the unconvinced. But it raises some questions about Lord Young's eyesight. Seen through a good many people's National Health spectacles, that glass is neither half full nor half empty. It is pretty close to bone dry.

# The phoney war myths that must be exploded

Paddy Ashdown

THE other day I received a pamphlet produced by the Ministry of Defence called "British Defence Policy." In an accompanying letter, the Minister of State for the Armed Forces, John Stanley, tells me that this is "an easily readable, but comprehensive description of Britain's Defence policy." Easily readable it may be, comprehensive it is not—at least not if that word also means "fair and full."

Not that Mr Stanley is personally to be blamed. He has only perpetuated some of the myths published in last year's White Paper and to which the makers of British defence policy (and the manufacturers of British defence equipment) have been happy to give much currency in the past—namely that the Warsaw Pact enjoys such a massive superiority in conventional weapons on the European front, that Nato has no option but to retain the option to be the first to use nuclear weapons in the event of a conflict.

against the Warsaw Pact's 2,543,000. In terms of ground forces actually on the European mainland, the advantage is still with Nato by 2,246,000 to 1,714,000.

A recent US Congressional Report, which took account of the uncertainties on both sides (the French on ours, the Romanians etc. on theirs), calculated the balance as follows. "The true Nato-Pact manpower ratio in the Central Region is more like 1.113 million (Nato) to between 890,000 and 933,000 (Warsaw Pact)." But what about the tanks and guns? Here life gets a little more complicated. All military thinking supports the view that, with competent forces on both sides, an attacker must have an advantage of at least three to one over a defender in order to have any prospect of success.

Mr Stanley's chart shows the Soviets enjoying a worrying superiority of 2.32 to 1 in tanks and 2.7 to 1 in guns. These figures too, suffer from the distortion of excluding the French and Spanish from our side, whilst including everything on theirs.

Mr Stanley's booklet is thus full of facts and figures about the superiority of the Warsaw Pact, just as defence ministers' speeches in the House of Commons, from Michael Heseltine down, have long repeated the same message.

And yet... their erstwhile colleague Lord Carrington, in an interview on television last week, Secretary General of Nato said "After all, we are not inferior militarily... our economies are infinitely superior... we've nothing to fear militarily."

Similarly, the Institute of Strategic Studies 1983-84 study "The military balance continues to be such as to make military aggression... highly risky."

Let's look at the facts as Mr Stanley presents them in his pamphlet. Defence spending first. Mr Stanley warns that the Soviets spend "Some 14-16 per cent of... income... on arms... about three times the Nato average." This is true—but it is not the percentages which nations spend on defence which enables them to have strong armies. It's the total amount of defence expenditure which counts.

And contrary to popular and well cultivated misconceptions, Nato's defence expenditure is twice as much as the Warsaw Pact's (\$307 billion against \$151 billion). Of course with twice the population of the Warsaw Pact (627 millions to 323 millions) and four or five times the GNP, this is less painful for us than them—but we are not weaker for that.

Next manpower. Mr Stanley's leaflet tells me that we have 800,000 soldiers, while the Pact has 900,000. What he hasn't told me is that his figures carefully exclude the armies of France and Spain (they are not formally in Nato, you see). If these two friendly countries are included, our total ground force manpower is 2,957,000

What all this adds up to is that the gap between our conventional weapons strengths and those of the Pact is not so great that it could not be bridged in a way that would give Nato effective conventional deterrents as well as nuclear ones. This is so, we are much closer than Mr Heseltine would like us to believe to the point where we could abandon a defence posture which relies on the fact that we will be the first to use nuclear weapons in a time of conflict—making the world a much safer place in consequence.

There are some key weaknesses in Nato—the political imbalance between Europe and the US; the lack of standardisation of equipment for the money we spend; weaknesses at sea and in air defence. It may even be that our reliance on the early use of tactical nuclear weapons is actually masking these weaknesses. Our Defence Ministers would do us a better service by directing our attention to the real problems of Nato, rather than conjuring up false bogey men with the aid of the MoD.

Paddy Ashdown is Liberal MP for Yeovil.

## In-House briefing



Stan Orme — leads Labour's attack in the debate on the miners' strike

BEHIND the scenes negotiations resulted in a victory for the Labour whips and a last-minute reorganisation of next week's business in the Commons. The Opposition strenuously objected to a series of controversial orders being put through late at night. After protests the Government relented.

The result is that an order putting into effect the latest round of rate capping will be debated in prime parliamentary time on Wednesday and two orders on London Regional Transport financing and the other on the Government's insistence that the Thames Water Authority should raise its water rate will be debated on Thursday, putting back the continuation of the committee stage of the Representation of the People Bill to next week.

LABOUR will be fielding Mr Stan Orme, the shadow energy secretary, to open the long awaited Opposition debate on the miners' dispute on Monday. Mr Jim Wallace, the Liberal MP, will join the attack for the Alliance against the Energy Secretary Peter Walker. Students of Alliance politics will be watching out for a slight difference in emphasis between the Liberals and the SDP.

THE all party Rights Campaign will be launching a bill on Monday night with a public meeting in the Commons to incorporate the Human Rights into UK law. The bill, which will be introduced in the Lords, could receive support from the political right and left wing. Labour MPs may back it because the European law affirms the right to belong to a trade union (for example, at GCHQ), while Tories support the convention's protection of property.

IN THE Lords a Labour peer, Lord Hatch of Lusby, was prevented from continuing questioning this week about the armed forces protecting nuclear installations on a technicality. The last time this was done was two years ago when Lord Constantine a crossbencher, was found to be boring the House about the Canada Bill. But Lord Hatch will be back on Tuesday with a question about the application of UK law to US armed forces in this country—exactly the same question.

THE SDP chief whip, Lord Kilmarnock, will open a Lords debate on Wednesday demanding the introduction of genetic prescribing by GPs, thus raising the controversy over the Government's so-called "black list" on NHS drugs. The same day Mr Frank Chappell will be introduced and will join the cross benches.

Colin Brown

# Rate cap is seen to be threadbare

DAVID BLUNKETT

THE Labour Party's local government conference opens in Birmingham today just as councils are entering the decisive phase of their campaign against rate-capping.

Crystal ball gazers could not have predicted a year ago the outbreak of local authority war which has occurred since the introduction of the Rates Act.

In spite of all the government's attempts to divide us, we go into discussions with Patrick Jenkin on Monday without any weakening of the collective stance we agreed six months ago—that we would refuse to accept ministerial demands for cuts in jobs and services. While we have struck together, the dubious logic of the Government's position has been shown to be increasingly threadbare. As the Guardian reported yesterday, the Department of the Environment's own sponsored research has demolished ministers' economic argument for using the law to remove local authorities' freedom to fix their rates.

This proof that rate-capping is an economic nonsense as well as a constitutional outrage will be of great help to us in winning over the uncommitted. The fact is that local government has been treated with remarkable contempt since this government secured its first term of office.

In Sheffield we are told rates have got to be cut by 0.56 per cent coupled with a further reduction in grant of £10 million. The general position for the capped councils is a cut in spending well in excess of 10 per cent. Leicester is told to cut its rate by 56 per cent—that is the measure of the malice behind the legislation. The cost in human terms and social consequences does not form part of the Environment Secretary's view of the world.

Ministers like Patrick Jenkin and Kenneth Baker

have the unenviable task of ushering in this new, inauspicious, era. Their own benches do not share their appetite for confrontation. Even worse both government spokesmen appear to misunderstand the very machinery they propose to use to abuse the democratic process.

Kenneth Baker is on record as saying that "Local authorities who take more than their share are, in effect, hijacking funds from other worthwhile programmes and projects. No government can tolerate such piracy."

The fact is, that the reverse is true. The more they spend, the more they lose in central government grant. The Exchequer has in fact been doing extremely well out of the so-called "overhead" of local authorities.

Even those who justify the negation of local democracy on the grounds of the overriding need to achieve greater success for government economic policies are hard put to do so in terms of the sums involved. If business recovery, reduced taxation and the prevention of increased interest rates all rest on this then the future of our country would soon take a rapid turn for the better.

Local government, with all its imperfections, has provided a system of checks and balances in a democracy which has no written constitution or a Bill of Rights. It is this issue alone questions of resources, needs and jobs which goes to the heart of the current conflict between many councils and central government. There is no doubt that civil and collective rights are being diminished through the rate-capping process.

We are told Parliament is supreme and that its own sovereignty is a justification for removing democratic challenges to the absolute power of the state. Yet local

government has provided just as valid a vehicle for social progress, change, innovation and choice. It is literally and physically closer to the people who, as citizens, have to be trusted with their own destiny even if the privileged and wealthy believe them to be wrong.

Recent and continuing rebellions on the Conservative benches and dissent across the political spectrum are a reflection of the rejection of these measures within council chambers and throughout the country. The measures have succeeded in uniting councils in England and Wales as well as Scotland in a way never previously considered possible.

Whitehall-run initiatives frequently fail at the first fence. Londoners already know to their cost what happens when the Government decides to take a service, like transport, away from council control. In the first six months in the life of London Regional Transport the capital's ratepayers have had to find an additional 37 per cent contribution and further reductions in the quality of the service are projected.

Parliament will debate the rate issue next month. It would do well to listen to wise words. "The Government believes that the cost of local choices should be clearly understood by local people," said Patrick Jenkin in a letter to the Labour rate-capped councils just before Christmas.

Next week the Secretary of State has an opportunity to back away from the brink. He can decide to be reasonable and discontinue the rate-capping process. He can introduce the legislation to the discussion then it will be clear that his mind is set on confrontation in the spring.

Councillor Blunkett is leader of Sheffield City Council and chair of the Local Government Campaign Unit.

# Why socialists should all be home owners

Paul Harrison

WHEN the principle of council housing comes under attack from the right, the instinctive reaction on the left is to reach for our guns to defend it. It might be more sensible to pause and ask: does council housing conform to socialist ideals of equality and liberty? If not, can it be made to do so?

If the answer to both questions is no, socialists should not waste their time defending the indefensible, but set about devising socialist ways of universalising home ownership.

At present, council housing harbours inequalities every bit as glaring as those in the private sector. Inequality is built into the spread of council's stock in space and time, from swaying tower blocks and hard-to-beat pre-war estates to bijoux residences in leafy cul-de-sacs.

If these very unequal properties were dished out "to each according to their need" one could speak of justice; if by lottery or queuing, one could perhaps call it rough justice.

Instead, just as in the private sector, income largely determines the quality of

housing. Every survey carried out has found that the least desirable council housing tends to be occupied by the most disadvantaged people. On the oldest estates, in the blocks without gardens, on the higher floors of tower blocks, there is a heavy over-representation of black people, single parents, the unemployed and the unskilled.

This is scandalous, and not much thought has been given to righting it. Part of the problem has been that homeless families, who are often disadvantaged, are usually given one offer only, often a hard-to-let place that no-one with a free choice would take.

The homeless should, as a minimum, get a fair share of good offers, preferably more than one each. Ethnic monitoring of housing allocations has been proposed as a way of reducing racial inequalities in housing. The principle should be extended to all disadvantaged social groups.

But all this can ensure is a rough equality of access between racial and social groups. No-one can force people to accept an offer, and the problem is that poorer people are more likely to accept poorer quality offers—either because the rent is lower, or because their present accommodation

is so bad they are desperate to get out of it.

The only way the poor can afford good, higher rent council housing at present is if they become permanently unemployed, and the state picks up the rent bill.

You could, of course, improve housing benefits for low paid workers so they covered 100 per cent of housing costs, or even equalise all council rents regardless of the quality. Either way, no one would then accept the rubbish, and the hard-to-lets would become impossible-to-lets.

A massive programme of rehabilitation could replace them with decent homes for all, but that would take a decade or more under ideal conditions. Nor would we end up with a homogenous stock: there would always be less desirable estates that were older, or further from parks, schools, shopping or transport.

So: it would take enormous doses of public money and socially conscious allocation processes, but it is at least conceivable that the internal injustices of council housing could be alleviated some time in the 21st century.

As Britain becomes increasingly polarised into two great housing classes, the unspoken class conflict between

them over state subsidy becomes more acute. Over the last five years, the average subsidy to council tenants has disappeared, while that to owner occupiers has increased. And under Tories and Labour alike, inflation in house prices has created untaxed magic capital for home owners, far in excess of their mortgage repayments. Council tenants, after a lifetime of coughing up rising rents, die without a penny to show for it.

The balance of subsidy can of course be reversed by Labour. Capital gains in housing could be taxed, though it would have to be at 100 per cent rates to stop the magic money trick. Now that owner occupiers are approaching three-fifths of the electorate any assault on their privileges of the magnitude required to set things right could be political suicide—and would be easily reversible by the next Tory government.

But it seems that the most ambitious practicable reforms of council housing would still leave it with fewer freedoms and privileges than owner occupation, and probably with continued inequalities within its own domain.

Rather than fight a losing battle to preserve what must always remain a second class form of tenure, Labour

should take the offensive and set about devising ways of making all tenants (including private tenants) into owner-occupiers either individually or as co-operators. If any demand for renting remains, it should be met by housing associations with a majority of tenants on their committees, rather than by local councils.

There would have to be a deliberate policy to bring about greater equality of housing provision, starting, in fairness, with large grants to the new owners of former council dump housing to bring it up to standard. Repair and maintenance grants would be needed to make sure even poor home owners could afford to maintain their properties.

Sooner or later the Tories may stand for election on a platform of converting all council tenants into owners. It would be the biggest government giveaway of all time, and it would be very hard for Labour to muster support to oppose it. The arithmetic of elections, as well as the logic of socialism, argues for Labour to pre-empt the move and make the policy its own.

Paul Harrison is author of *Inside The Inner City* (Penguin 24.50). A revised edition is published on February 23.

# Come to our boxing night and do a child a favour

Whilst you eat, drink and watch Young England box Young Ireland in eight three-round bouts, you could be helping handicapped children.

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Tickets are £26.00 and tables for ten people up to thirty people are available.

It's at the Park Lane Hilton, on Monday, February 11th. It's a Stag Night, Black Tie and it starts at 7.00 p.m.

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The Lord's Taverners  
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Boxing Evening



## Drowning, not waving, off Cromer pier

Nancy Banks-Smith on show business that's slow business

"THIS time it's the Big Time!" sang Gordon and Bunny Jay to an elderly audience at the end of Cromer Pier. In a short time they could be the cherry (they continued confidently) on top of the sundae, the star (they shouted nice and loudly for the pensioners) on top of the tree.

Backstage they were less sanguine: "We don't bring 'em in but we don't keep 'em out either. We're a good support and good supports

can go on for a long time." They are so alike that they look like a parrot split down the middle but you know which is which because Gordon automatically caps Bunny's lines. They have come straight from panto in Sunderland where, you feel without any grounds for doing so, they must have played the broker's men.

Behind them Jayne Michelle and Christina smiled bravely and danced carefully, balancing unsteady feathered headresses which looked like three turkeys bending over in a high wind. Each

turkey seemed to have become entangled in a fishing net, the whole ensemble being possibly a delicate compliment to the staple industries of Norfolk.

The director of the end of the pier show, Bob Marlowe, had begged pitifully for four dancers. "Three does present choreographic difficulties," A brisk dismissal of choreographic difficulties trembled on the producer's lips but he swallowed and spoke eloquently on the theme of quality, not quantity. "I'd better get tall ones then," sighed Marlowe,

"they'll fill the stage more." "Any shape or size you want, Bob," said the producer, instantly affable. A couple of dozen dancers auditioned — "I try not to tell them how many vacancies I've got," said Marlowe, a kindly man, "I don't want to dishearten them." The Eastern Daily Press ("Shadow Cast Over Pier Show's Future") had no such scruples. This Forty Minutes (BBC-2), directed by Clem Vallance, was called the End of the Pier Show. It's a title which repays a second look.

At Cromer the sea comes in like charging cavalry, swinging a sabre of a wind. Air-sea rescue services keep visitors entertained by winching blue holidaymakers from grey waves. In this respect, and Albert Ramsbottom would be the first to agree, it is a great improvement on Blackpool where there are no wrecks and nobody drowning, in fact nothing to laugh at at all. Surprisingly, it must be the salt; local people live forever. Most of them seemed to be in the audience, and Gordon, for one,

was grateful: "Old age pensioners know how to react in a theatre."

This is perfectly true. I went to a play just down the road at Sheringham's aptly named Little Theatre. As the murderer whetted his cruel blade there came a cry from the audience: "You'll catch it when your ma gets back!" "Hush, Gran!" snatched her family, giggling a good deal.

Actors behave like this too, I have noticed. When they are invited to watch their own programmes they

always laugh a lot. Sometimes they slap each other encouragingly on the back. At the end they clap and shout. "Well done!" It makes critics sick. People who watch a great deal of television do not react at all. Cheap and cheerful shows like Cromer's are in danger not just because people stay home and watch television but because they go out and behave as if they were still watching television.

The opening number on the opening night "What a pig's ear!" said Gordon savagely. "Gordon said we

cocked up the opening," said the magician stiffly. "I thought that sounded a bit phallic." But the pensioners, pulling their weight, responded like troupers to Gordon's gag about the dead sea, and the Eastern Daily Press, pulling its socks up, pitched in with a slow critical reaction. "A show booked for 12 weeks, closed in 10 for lack of support. Odd that a flop, drawing a hundred or so, should be so appealing, so endearing, so popping with charm on television. And draw, more or less, five million."

Left, Myriem Roussel as Mary and, right, with Philippe Lacoste as the Angel Gabriel

Jean-Luc Godard's new film about the birth of Christ, set in the present on the shores of Lake Geneva, has caused a storm in France and puzzled the critics. Richard Roud reports from Paris

## Mary, Mary, quite contrary

JEAN-LUC Godard has had his brushes with censorship in France before: his second film *Le Petit Soldat* was banned for over a year because of its denunciation of the French during the Algerian war.

Then *La Femme Mariée* was temporarily banned as an insult to French womanhood, but that problem was Jesuitically solved by changing the definite article to the indefinite, and the film appeared as *Une Femme Mariée* (A Married Woman was less offensive than The Married Woman; less universal, more particular).

Now he's in trouble again, although I think only temporarily, for his latest film *Je Vous Salue, Marie* (Hail Mary, but not to be confused with another recent film called *Ave Maria* which starred Godard's former wife, Anna Karina).

This time the trouble is not about a soldier or a married woman, but about a virgin: *The Virgin*, in fact. For the subject of the film is an

up-dated version of the story of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, set in 1984 on the shores of Lake Geneva.

Mary is a virgin: we see her visit her doctor who pronounces that she is indeed intact, but that she is just as indubitably pregnant as she is virgin.

Godard's Mary works at a petrol station and plays basketball in her spare time; Joseph drives a car. When in due course she gives birth, it is with a donkey and an ox in attendance to the tune of *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring* on the piano (shades of Dame Myra Hess). And the last we see of the Holy Family is Jesus, aged about three, living with Mary and Joseph. After his initial doubts, Joseph has come to accept the situation though he still has a few problems when they are reduced into a car (the flight to Egypt?). Little Jesus says, "I am that I am," but Joseph replies somewhat testily, "Shut up and get into the back seat."

As reported in the Guardian

last Saturday, the censorship problem began (and let's hope, will end) in Versailles where a complaint was made to the police that the film was offensive. The film was not exactly banned, just not allowed to run because of "fears of public unrest" (it was replaced by a revival of *Midnight Express*!).

And yet the film was very favourably reviewed by the national press, including the official Roman Catholic newspaper, *La Croix*. After the Versailles incident, *La Croix* hazarded a guess that the trouble was coming from the traditionalists, that group of Catholics who still reject the vernacular mass and are opposed to the priest facing the congregation.

This hypothesis sounds very likely because there is little that could be taken as offensive in the film, except that we do see Mary naked, and there are some very beautiful shots of her swollen belly, including the public area. And then there is a cute little porcupine that suddenly appears in her bed

which might be taken as some kind of sexual symbol.

The real mystery about the film is why Godard wanted to make it. He was, after all, brought up as a Calvinist, and Hail Mary is not a Protestant prayer (Godard in fact admitted in an interview that he knows only the first line). But in another interview he said that he only remembered after the film was completed that his own mother's name had been Marie. And perhaps he still doesn't know that the Hebrew name for Mary is Miriam, and that there might be some connection with the fact that the actress who plays Mary (and who also seems to be quite close to Godard's heart) is called Myriem Roussel.

However, I am not sure that the point of the film is really religious: rather, it may be about the notion that men "must learn how to be masculine" (to Nature, is a non-essential luxury," to quote Auden, of whom there seem to be many unconscious echoes in the film).

With the latest advances in biology it does seem as if parthenogenesis (virgin birth) might indeed become a possibility. There have already been experiments along these lines: pregnancy without sexual contact. Who knows what may be around the corner? "Today's Loe roles are altered; you must be The Weaker Sex whose passion is passivity. Auden again, perceptively, in 1941.

Some French psychoanalysts have advanced the view that the reason why the Virgin Birth proved so acceptable a dogma (to men at least) was the secret desire of many men not to have had a father, not to have any physical male rival for their mother's love: Jesus, as it were, as anti-Oedipus.

But then again it is entirely possible that Godard is using the theme of procreation to stand for that of creation. And in Hail Mary he has created an astonishingly beautiful work. All the lake scenes, the repeated (and extraordinary) shots of

the sun and moon which punctuate the film, and much else, are of supreme beauty, helped out by Bach and Dvorak's Cello Concerto.

He has also framed each shot in an unorthodox manner trying for the unframed look of some of the later works of Bonnard which were cut down after they were painted, thus rendering them asymmetrical. But one important French critic, Michel Perez of *Le Matin*, drew an interesting parallel between the physical impotence of Don José in *First Name Carmen* and the enforced chastity of Joseph in Hail Mary. This view suggests that it is also a film about a strong woman and a weak man.

That all these interpretations have been advanced, should not imply that Godard has made a confused film. Rather it is a tribute to his genius that many interpretations are possible. Hail Mary may not be Godard's greatest film, but it is one of his most provocative — in the best sense of that word.

## A licence to whinge

Val Arnold-Forster on the BBC's attempt to win new friends

I DO WONDER if the BBC is sensible to devote quite so much air time to its upping-of-the-licence-fee campaign. This Sunday we had a discussion between some broadcasting heavies, including the Chairman of the BBC, a couple of interested MPs — both ex-broadcasters — and Lord Annan, followed by the Director-General, Alasdair Milne, on Tuesday Call.

Quite apart from the boredom of that whining note which seems to emanate so frequently from the BBC top

brass, isn't there a risk of waking up some sleeping protesters if, as some politicians assert, raising the cost of the TV licence would be fiercely unpopular?

The phone-in not surprisingly produced a number of complaints, including those about what the callers felt was undue extravagance. And the BBC argument, reiterated on Sunday, that advertising on the Beeb will inevitably result in a nasty ratings war was somewhat diminished by Milne's answer to the first call on Tuesday: the transmission time of *By Your Side* was suddenly changed in response, not so much to children's bed-time (as the caller had been told), but to the BBC's realisation that "the others" were offering strong competition. The ratings war seems to be raging with or without advertising.

But these arguments on radio are really about television, which is so very much

more expensive to run than radio. Lord Annan's jolly suggestion that the BBC could drop Radio 1 was dismissed by the Chairman of the Governors. As well as the (slightly patronising) view that Radio 1 is "keeping in touch with the younger listeners," it seems that doing away with Radio 1 would only knock £1 off the licence fee.

Television and its future developments are what the debate is about. And I wonder if television viewers are quite so convinced about the excellence of the BBC: The Jewel in the Crown v. The Thornbirds has had the same effect on that argument as Harold Wilson's possibly apocryphal remark about Marks & Spencer v. the Co-op had on the argument about the efficiency of nationalised industries. But whereas I wouldn't presume to adjudicate between television channels and am well aware that independent local

radio is far more popular than its local BBC competition, the real excellence of the BBC lies in its network radio and of course in the External Services. But why go on hearing about it on Radio 4? If you're listening to Radio 4, you already know.

I know it, certainly, and I'm sorry that some of the recent plays (short pause for the familiar plus about the quantity of plays to be heard on radio) have left me so addled. Is it just the post-holiday blues, or have we met more than we can stomach of unappealing people in improbable dramas?

There have been the awful marriages: the silly, spoilt prospective father in Elaine Morgan's sharp little Welsh comedy, *What's Got Into You?*, followed by the even more horrendous husband, raking over past miseries at his semi-conscious wife, in Elizabeth Morgan's grim *Responses*. Then there were the stereo-

typed goodies and baddies in *Inside Out* by John Chambers, the middle-aged child-abuser in Matthew Solon's *The Glasshouse*, the poor loopy lady in Patricia Chapman's *By Flower And Dear Street*, and the dreadful caricature of a company director in Nancy Livingston's *Slimming Down*.

The plays themselves were good enough examples of capable, run-of-the-mill short radio plays: Ms Chapman, for instance, had a neatly engineered and imaginative use of time-transference. Richard Pearson's performance in *The Glasshouse* was deftly balanced between the pathetic and the horrible, and the other couples in *Slimming Down* were far more believable.

Alan Masse's Quintet in October (Radio 4, Monday, to be repeated Sunday) was unconvincing. Family dramas have a hallowed tradition, the meetings of brothers and sisters in later life revealing

all manner of hidden tensions and dramatic possibilities. But here, with three brothers and two sisters meeting after their dominating mother's funeral, there was little sense of those tensions or dramatic possibilities.

Even the admirable Stewart Parker in his latest play, *The Traveller* (Radio 3, Wednesday), had chosen an unattractive hero — or rather hero plus after ego. This hero, a successful travel writer, is so incensed by the fact that his wife has told other people about her scandalous birth that he takes off on a voyage of self-discovery round these islands.

He meets various odd characters on his travels, but I gave up at the point he settled down to the seduction of a sea-sick Irish girl on a ferry. I didn't fancy lustful vomiting for the sake of discovering the inner soul of this foolish fellow: I might have thrown up.

## FESTIVAL HALL

Hugo Cole

## Panufnik premiere

ALMOST a whole evening of music for organ, strings and timpani, with Jennifer Bate taking over at short notice from the indisposed Carlo Curley, and involved in all but one of the works of Panufnik's *Metastasio* was the centrepiece, not to be missed as orthodox symphony or concerto, being mainly concerned with the winding and unwinding of time, with little contrast or drama of opposition, and concerto-like only in the surprising appearance of a big cadenza near the end.

As in a set of variations textures varied from section to section (there are 13 organ parts in a systematic metrical plan). There are many interesting conjunctions of texture and timbre and some heartfelt tunes. Yet in spite of Jennifer Bate's clear and discreet performance, the general impression was very much of a one-mood work with the organ's bland legato too often obscuring and lessening the effect of the orchestra's contribution. The "Poulenc" engaging concerto of 1938, also with strings and timpani, contains much material which organ and orchestra can share without embarrassment and without the problems of the ensemble which were so successfully, Poulenc invents a racy character for the instrument, in the context of which heroic gestures and displays of sentiment are not to be taken seriously.

Mandell's *Chaconne* and Nightingale organ concerto, is not one of his best works but is not as dull as it seemed to be in this sedate and respectable performance. It is a work which implores the virtuoso to make liberties with it; Curley would surely have obliged, but Miss Bate was having none of that.

The LSO under John Georgiadis knew well how Elgar's *Spring* Serenade should go: the movement phrased flexibly and expressively yet without a hint of sentimentality.

## ELIZABETH HALL

Meirion Bowen

## St Martin's Academy/Bourgeois

THE ARRIVAL on stage of the French school, Maurice Bourgeois, hoisted this Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields concert on to another plane. For Bourgeois challenged the violinist Kenneth Sillito, whom he partnered in D Major, Opus 2, No 3, to equal his rich tone quality and spacious phrasing.

Sillito responded well, especially in the finale, but it was perhaps inevitable that the soloist, as the only wind player in an ensemble otherwise made up of strings and harpsichord, should remain dominant. Nor could anyone object when Bourgeois's cantabile delivery was as liquid and persuasive as it was in the slow movement.

There was no rivalry to Bourgeois at all in Sillito's Oboe Concerto in E Flat. This was a brief composition, shaped like an operatic scene, with the orchestra merely introducing, and thereafter supporting, the soloist in a slow aria-like section and a lively polonaise. But it offered the soloist plenty of scope for displaying his ability in fast tonguing passages, as well as a generous allowance of rapturous melody. Bourgeois here had the dramatic poise and precision to make second rate music seem passionately alive.

The Academy's performances of Handel's *Concerto Grosso* A minor, Opus 6, No 4, and Albinoni's *Sonata* in A Major, Opus 2, No 3 were somewhat cooler. The anguished finale of the Handel (also the basis of an aria in his opera *Imeneo*), particularly, was too detached, expressively on one level throughout. But in the last movement of the Albinoni's Sillito's team suddenly awoke to the dance-like of the music, to the harmonic richness also provided by two independent viola lines, and their playing was more invigorating.

The Academy's best was reserved for the full string orchestra version of Verdi's *Quartet* in E Minor. In this, the scherzo movement was especially impressive, performed at the point of the

## COVENT GARDEN

Mary Clarke

## Nutcracker

THE last Nutcracker of the present season at Covent Garden should have been led by Bryony Brind (who had made her Sugar Plum Fairy debut on Boxing Night) dancing with a new partner, Derek Deane. A foot injury prevented her from dancing, so we shall have to wait to see how she might blossom in the great pas de deux in the care of a partner as experienced, helpful, and assured as Deane.

In the event, Fiona Chadwick danced with radiant authority and sweetness of manner, impeccable both in grandeur of gesture and in intricate, delicate footwork. Deane gave her every support, presented her with the self effacement of a true danseur noble, and performed his own solos with style. The production has now settled in a new, more magical, and more transformational work (although the Christmas tree still grows with a wobble), and the dancers, children and adults alike, have become convincing characters in the party scene. Moreover, the whole concept of the ballet, held together at this performance by Alexander Grant's extraordinary power of personality as Herr Drosselmeyer.

He comes as near as anyone can to make clear that the Nutcracker doll is in fact his beloved nephew under a spell. There is a moment of truth when, after he has tended her toy, Clara kisses him and the old man seems to realise that she will indeed be the creature of goodness whose love will break the spell. It was a great performance from a great artist.

As the young people, Julie Rose was an enchanting Clara and Simon Rice a most engaging Nutcracker boy, making his account of the battle with relish and humour. For the audience, however, the hero of the evening was the Bolshoi conductor, Gennady Rozhdestvensky. From the orchestra he drew ravishing playing of this most ravishing of Tchaikovsky's ballet scores.

## NEW END

Michael Billington

## Breaks

A YOUNG guy, one of a tearaway foursome, strikes friendship with an ageing park-keeper. Neglecting his girl and his mates, he finds a distinct echo of his own frustrated ambitions as a pop artist in the old man's thwarted footballing dreams. On his return from an abortive trip to London, he beats the old man, robs him of his uniform and presumably takes over his identity.

Such is the bare outline of Mick Yates's *Breaks*, which the Floorboards Company are presenting in a double bill at Hampstead's New End; and it is Mr Yates's misfortune that his play arrives in London while Edward Bond's amazingly similar *The Power of Women* is playing at the Royal Court. Where Bond's play is mysterious and poetic, Mr Yates's piece is garrulous, explicit and suggests that the hero, Mick, is much concerned with seeking a father-substitute (his old man is in an asylum) and with finding an outlet for his social frustrations.

Mr Yates, to be fair, understands the dynamism of group behaviour; and the best thing in the play is the way the noisy, misanthropic gang use a semi-literate halcyon as both a target for abuse and an invaluable standby when they need a quick pizza or some rent money. But although Mr Yates catches something of the aimless, footloose quality of these coastal drifters, overlooking like some rough beast the dialogue seems to consist of endless exchanges of one-liners.

The key relationship between Mick the would-be musician (Mark Billington) and the old party with the litter-spill (Bernard Martin) also lacks credibility, but about him something inexplicable. Mr Yates's brusque park-keeper is simply an aged pipe-dreamer whose magnetism is hard to understand.

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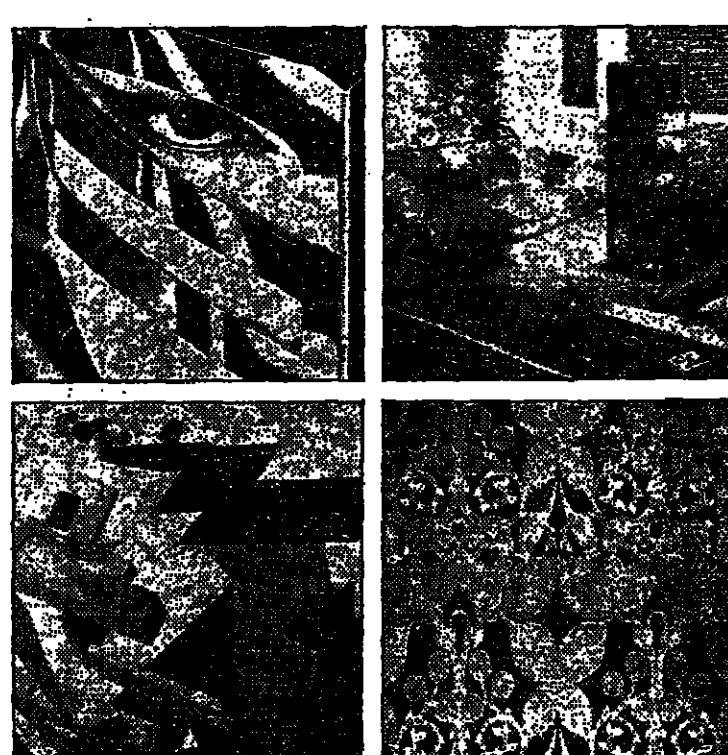
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John Frances Lane on Dario Fo's historical fantasy

## Bess man



Dario Fo as the bard

HAVING been discovered rather belatedly but generously by the British stage, Italy's two great contemporary actor-dramatists Eduardo De Filippo and Dario Fo seem to have found the complete acceptance by dedicating themselves to our national Bard.

Just before his death, Eduardo translated and recorded a version in archaic Neapolitan of *The Tempest*. And now we have Fo making Shakespeare a central (if not the) character of his new play "Elizabeth: a woman only by accident," which, with Franca Rame as the Virgin Queen, has just had its official opening at Rome's popular Teatro Tenda, a Big Top tent venue.

It is Fo's first full length play since *Trumpets and Raspberries* opened in Milan four years ago and which London seems to have taken to with gusto. It is a play apart from his visits with his wife to northern Europe and a fiasco on Broadway, in Italy Fo has been continuing his one-man shows, performing to enraptured audiences the latest pieces in his *Mistero Buffo* tradition, complete with the political patter which gets longer and longer.

Having accustomed everyone to these introductions, it isn't surprising to find him on stage at the beginning of his new play, not only ushering in the audience and making them behave themselves when they try to occupy seats for late arriving friends, but giving a history lesson. It is part of the show and is probably a great help to those who don't know what was going on in England in 1601, the year in which the play is set.

"I've invented a lot but not everything," he admits. And we all find it great fun to learn that the first Elizabeth was not only Empress and Pirate but also Pope, or Popessa. Then the play begins and we soon hear the Queen calling Shakespeare a bastard because he is writing plays which are propaganda for the terrorists who are conspiring against the state (and though she has a handsome youth staying the night, she obviously is angry that Essex or Essex as Rame pronounces it has deserted her bed-chamber).

By the time the chief of her "Intelligence Service" has described how he tortured some information out of his prisoners, we realise that his Elizabethan England is familiar Fo territory.

When Fo himself finally appears as actor he is in drag. He is Donna Anna, or Bawd, and turns out to be a Venetian who has obviously won her way into court thanks to her wondrous potions and insect cures, the latter helping to make Elizabeth's boobs fill out again, something Rame herself doesn't need.

She speaks a rich Venetian dialect and when she pens a letter on the Queen's behalf and someone asks what language it is, she says "Anglo-Venetian".

It is a wonderful characterization but it seems a pity that Fo doesn't give himself more of those truly hilarious gags that have kept the pace moving in his political farces. Of course he will get plenty of laughs, some of them scatological and concerning Elizabeth's habit of peeing under her crinoline.

He is determined to believe that Shakespeare is the Dario Fo of his time and reads all sorts of amazing significance into "To be or not to be." As Shakespeare was writing in the time of the Essex conspiracy, it is legitimate enough to believe that an Elizabethan might indeed have read more political than psychological meaning into lies about "the oppressor's wrong".

When Fo's Bawd exclaims "Theatre! Talk! meddling in politics! Who ever heard of such a thing?" we know what he means. But one can't help feeling that a long introduction by Fo and a monologue by Rame would have been better than a shambles of a play which hasn't the theatrical inventiveness of his 1983 *Isabella, Three Sailing Ships* and a *Swindler* in which Rame played another celebrated queen.

Still, the last 15 minutes of the new play are taken up by what amounts to a monologue by Rame who mesmerises the audience with Elizabeth's nightmare-vision of the rolling beds of Essex and Marston. She also, maybe her own, is the only part of the play which could probably bear translation, unless of course in the months to come — as has happened in the past — Fo manages to put a little more life into the rest of it.

FOR ALL the variety of its artistic and commercial enterprises, its neighbourhoods and its lifestyles, the municipal politics of London remain perplexingly boring. Although Ken Livingstone has at least created interest in the GLC's fight for survival.

London politics were not always so dull. There were heady days of change in the 1920s, when the first boroughs returned Labour councils, whose visions of the New Jerusalem became concrete in run down bits of the East End and south of the Thames. For a few years, energy and talent from a new political direction hit the frosty Victorian metropolis. Some leaders of the then-fragmented Labour movement were later to graduate to the hierarchy of the Parliamentary Labour Party.

Among them were Herbert Morrison of Lambeth, who became Home Secretary, and George Lansbury of Poplar, elected leader of the Labour Opposition in 1931. Their names are gazetted on blocks of flats, now in need of refurbishment, and on streets in places like Barking and Enfield — carried there by East Enders who decided that the Promised Land lay in the Home Counties. They will flicker more vividly to life for the next few weeks in a play at the Theatre Royal, Stratford East.

For their new piece, playwright Barrie Keeffe has returned to his early patch as a reporter, turned up the files of his old rag, and dramatised the goings-on in Poplar, when the councilors became martyrs in their fight for a more equitable rates system. From the writer who worked on the stylish gangster film, *The Long Good Friday* (set mostly in the East End), the subject of a rates battle might not sound sexy. However, the events were packed with conflict, as his researches soon revealed.

Most of the council were locked up in Brixton Prison, where they continued to conduct official business for refusing to levy that portion of the rates due to the London County Council (forerunner of the GLC) to pay for services such as asylums, police and water. Poplar suffered high unemployment — 25 per cent — and low rateable values in the 1920s. The council could not afford to pay outdoor relief (the precursor of social security) to the destitute on as generous a scale as it wanted. So it decided not to bother with raising funds for the LCC, but to concentrate rates revenue on local problems.

Pre Welfare State, giving financial help to the jobless was a responsibility of the boroughs and local boards of guardians, who administered the Poor Law. The fight in Poplar, headed by Lansbury,



George Lansbury (holding child) and supporters in 1921 and Barrie Keeffe (right). Picture by Garry Weaser

Barrie Keeffe talks to John Cunningham about his new play *Better Times*

## Old Poplar yields up the roots of revolt

led eventually to all London boroughs contributing equally to a central fund; the West End was made to shoulder part of that burden which was unfairly fallen on the threadbare shoulders of East End councils.

It's part of the Labour struggle, which has been given a name — Poplarism — and a footnote in the history of the Left. It is also, says Keeffe, the stuff of good documentary plays. The East End isn't new territory for Keeffe — he was born there and has drawn material from it. In the past is a new domain for him; and this slice of local history is particularly well recorded.

"It is the first time I've done a documentary play," he says. "Because the events are within living memory, there is so much material. Almost everything is documented.

The Poplar rates strike made national headlines, of course; and events were so serious in their implications that prime minister Lloyd George was involved, behind the scenes, in their resolution.

But apart from the yellowing print in newspaper files, many relatives of the councilors are still alive. "As a journalist, I was always shy," Keeffe recalls. "But doing this research, the name of Lansbury was the key. Mention it, and front rows were opened, brown ale flowed."

Lansbury was known as the John Bull of Poplar, even in later political life (he edited the *Daily Herald* briefly). He was always identified with the East End. Ruddy-faced, father of many, a missionary in his zeal, he took his socialism from the Bible rather than from Marx. Like his

pacifism it was potent rather than precise.

It was a council crammed with colourful characters, and Keeffe says he had to take care to include some ordinary folk to keep the balance. But clearly Poplar's history is a gift to a dramatist.

One of Lansbury's closest allies was Alderman Susan Lawrence. In real life, she came from a Tory family, father a judge, she herself gained a double first at Newham, Cambridge. And, as she says in *Better Times*, "I'm supposed to be a bit of a financial wizard." Plunged into good works, weighed in as a Tory on the LCC and then eyes opened.

However, all the angels weren't on the same side; or at least they did not all see eye to eye. Keeffe presents in

his play the conflict between Lansbury and Herbert Morrison over the strategy which the council should use.

Morrison was anxious not to split the incipient Labour movement, and he in turn wasn't too rapturously received by the imprisoned Poplar representatives when he came to Brixton to say that he had been to discuss with the councilors the possibility of trading heavily on the hook the law had been broken, after all and which would vindicate the council's action in withholding funds from the LCC.

Keeffe spent 10 months working on the play — his first theatre piece for four years — and from conversations with current Tower Hamlets councilors, together with his observations of how meetings

and committees operate — he brings out the power play between personalities in the rates incident. "I hope this comes out in the Morrison-Lansbury confrontations. And with councilors such as John Scurr who said, 'I don't care if Labour never comes to power if it means compromising on a principle'."

Keeffe has treated his characters and his material with some reverence. His luck is that the issue is, after 60 years, again topical: the nose is round the GLC's neck, and councils are worried about rate-capping. It is a triumphphant play — if you know the history, you'll know the outcome. Keeffe sees it as a great celebratory event in depressing times. It seemed right in 1984 to have a blast of that.

The problem, from a writer's stand, he says, is the wealth of character and incident. "It could have been a Nicholas Nickleby play. Or it could have been just the play about the trial." Instead, he has settled for something in between. Its shape is very much the shape of historic events: the formula for releasing the councilors from Brixton is a politico-legal fix. What was he as a dramatist to make of it? "To get them out of the deadlock which was actually reached, it seemed that the best solution really was the obvious one: to tell it like it really was." After a four-year flirtation with films and television Keeffe is back in the theatre. The cracked gill plaster of the Theatre Royal, Stratford East, which he fingers like a good luck charm as he talks, is as good a place as any to fall in love with the theatre, as Keeffe says he has. Now he is 40 and "One seems to write bigger plays."

He has come through small bits of small worlds, as in his earlier work *Only a Game* (about football), a personal obsession: *A Mad World My Masters* (about the spivvy East End) and *Bastard Angel* (downhill all the way for a rock musician).

Part of him has become more political: his play "Sus" proved that. He is a Socialist, but does not belong to any party; and he is not a political playwright, like David Edgar and David Hare. "I don't set out to write political plays. I felt very angry, though, about the Sus law, and wrote that play. I've been feeling a sense of disaffection with the Labour Party of late, and this latest play — *Better Times* — reminded me of all the reasons why I am a Socialist."

Part of him has not become political at all. He should be said. The owners of Radio City, New York, have commissioned him to write a stage musical of "Round The World in Eighty Days", the fantasy of that is to appeal to him. It is a project he has in hand, and represents a very different direction from the antics of the good men (and women) of Poplar. But where does that leave him? "There is a clue. 'One is always in danger of writing the same play again and again.' Even while writing some of his earlier works — about the work of young people, he felt there was a sense of déjà vu about them. Still, his nose for news might lead him to the next good plot."

*Better Times* opens at the Theatre Royal, Stratford East, on Monday.

## Let's get physical

Kenneth Rea on why London's Mime Festival needs a change of image



Flights of fancy from the Mime Theatre Project

IN EIGHT years the London International Mime Festival has so effectively shaken off its old Marcel Marceau image that the word "mime" hardly seems to apply anymore. This however has its problems. The category has become so wide that many performers are left wondering what to call themselves and the potential audience is no longer sure what to expect.

A forum held at the Place during the festival reflected this confusion of identity. It also indicated that while the British mime scene has expanded tremendously, largely thanks to the festival, attitudes need to change if further headway is to be made.

Historically, mime has been an appendage to mainstream theatre, occasionally going silent, and periodically hitching itself up on the efforts of other writers who make into the commercial circuit — Debureau in the 19th century, Marceau in the 20th.

For the rest though, it has been hard going. If mime is to continue in Britain as an art form in its own right, then it must clearly decide what it is trying to do that other areas of

theatre and dance cannot do. For there is now a good deal of overlap (much to the alarm of the Arts Council which still classifies mime under dance).

As many mimes move closer to theatre, greater demands are made on them, particularly once they open their mouths. Just as the actor is now obliged to take more seriously the physical part of his training, so the mime needs to give more attention to the voice.

From a different viewpoint, the impact of mime can be measured in terms of the effect it has on conventional theatre, as when actors use its ideas and techniques, leading to what is often called physical theatre.

A fine example is Cheek by Jowl's production of *Pericles* (seen recently at the Donmar Warehouse). The RSC's clown-world comedy of *Errors*, back at the Barbican, is another. The connection, however, is seldom direct. Why more actors and directors don't go to see mime performances I do not understand because they can be a valuable source of enrichment. But the cross-fertilisation

must work both ways. Several of the mime festivals I have seen, both in this and abroad, have come unstuck through a lack of basic theatrical — entertainment value, to be blunt — and they have ended up trading heavily on the goodwill of the audience.

Usually it is because of the discrepancy between form and content: good performance, marred by weak material. Sometimes an idea will be padded out and stretched too far, sometimes not carried through far enough, or treated too simplistically. Sometimes set and costume changes slow the pace, and vital rhythm is lost. Or else the performers are simply too vague about what they are trying to say.

This is partly because some artists are rushing too easily into public performance before they have really developed their technique. So we get the Lecocq imitations, the Decroux imitations, and mediocre standards. Comparison with the more disciplined Continental groups will confirm this. From choice or necessity, the mime has traditionally

created his own material. But lately several have resorted to a director to give an outside view and tighten up weak spots, a hopeful sign, I think. Perhaps a next step should be to attract writers, which would give an enormous boost to those whose strength lies in telling the story rather than inventing it.

David Glass, for example, has done just that in his new show, *The Shrinking Man* (at the Drill Hall) in which he collaborated with the writer David Gale, director Hilary Westlake and cartoonist Ralph Steadman.

But to the public the white face of Marceau still hovers like a spectre and many performers feel embarrassed or frustrated by the connection. One way of cutting loose has been to avoid the word "mime" altogether. In fact, most of those appearing in this year's festival cunningly call themselves theatre companies. But this only leaves the public in confusion, or, as often happens, the public leaves in confusion before the show has ended. So what is to be done?

My view is that by demonstrating so well the variety of

mime the Mime Festival has come to the end of its usefulness. This year there are monologues, duologues, circuses, masks and body sculptures, as well as what we used to understand by mime.

A new term is needed to define this area and link it with the theatre itself, the criterion being that it is a type of art where physical expression is particularly prominent. Under a name like Physical Theatre Festival nearly all the participants of the present Mime Festival would be included, as well as certain productions by fringe theatre groups like Lumiere and Son, or Cheek by Jowl.

Even the subsidised theatre could occasionally be involved: the National's *Strider*, the Story Of A Horse, or the RSC's *Comedy Of Errors* would certainly qualify. This would enlarge the festival, but would also help it reach a much wider public. Most of all, a festival of physical theatre could inject the kind of vitality and excitement that comes from seeing theatre in a new way. And that goes for the actors as well as the audience.

## BRIEFING

### THEATRE

ANTHONY Hopkins and Samantha Eggar star in Arthur Schnitzler's *The Lonely Head*, set in turn-of-the-century Vienna, which opens at the Old Vic. Christopher Fettes directs and co-translates. Barrie Keeffe's *Better Times*, dealing with the Poplar Rates Strike of 1921, bows at the Theatre Royal, Stratford East with Philip Hedley directing. A French company, Gréta Chute Libre, presents *Ceremonies: A Melodrama at The Place*. Eric Chappell's *Natural Causes* with Michael Robbins and Ian Lavender opens at the Palace Watford. Nigel Williams's *My Brother's Keeper*, directed by Alan Dossor, premieres at Greenwich Theatre. Asian Theatre Co-Operative offer a new play by Farrukh Dhondy, *Vigilantes*, set in the East End of the 1980s and directed by Penny Chernus. At the Arts, Matthew Marsh plays the prince in *Hamlet* at the Young Vic. Wooden O presents a very funny play by Peter McDonald, *Eight*, at the Soho-Poly. Ned Sherrin directs a double-bill. Where Are You Going, Hollis Jay and Bar and Ger, at Pentameters, NW3.

**Recommended** *Doomsday and The Nativity* (Cottesloe): Friday, Saturday: Bill Bryden's stunning production of the medieval mysteries spanning the Creation to Judgment Day. *The Pit*: Friday, Saturday: A Russian family caught on a train: vintage Poliakoff. *Michael Billington*

### OPERA

*La Traviata* (Covent Garden tonight, Wednesday, tomorrow). Michael Rissenow's revival of the old Visconti staging tries to get back to first thoughts. Colin Davis, conducting, is an idiosyncratic Verdian. Neil Shicoff makes a very promising Alfredo. Ciofubas a very touching Violetta. *Tristan and Isolde* (Coliseum tomorrow, Thursday). Disappointingly neutral Friedrich staging, with strong principals in Johanna Meier's rather bland Isolde and Alberto Remedios's sweet-toned Tristan. Linda Finnle excellent as Goodall conducts.



John Rawnsley — Coliseum.

*Rigoletto* (Coliseum Wednesday, tomorrow week). Excellent revival of Miller's little Italian adaptation, superbly conducted by John Mancini. Classy and ringing interpretations of the central trio (last chance before cast changes): John Rawnsley's tragic jester / wailer Arthur Davies's winning Duke and Valerie Masterson's moving Gilda. Don't miss.

*Tosca* (Coliseum tonight). Last chance for strong revival. Mackerras conducting stylishly. Charles Craig's veteran Cavaradossi a model. Neil Howarth's elegant Scarpia top class, and Phyllis Cannan's full throated Tosca very promising.

Tom Sutcliffe

### DANCE

AT Covent Garden tomorrow night, the Royal Ballet ends the present season's Cinderella revival, led by Marguerite Porter and Jay Jolley. On Monday, *The Sleeping Beauty* comes back into the repertoire, led by Collier-Jeffries, repeated on Tuesday with BrindDeane. Next Thursday, *Manon* is revived with Jennifer Penney, Dowell and Jeffries.

At the ICA Theatre from Tuesday to Saturday the American dancer Timothy Buckley appears in *Surfing on the Shortwaves*, a collaboration with the composer Blue Gene Tyranny and three London based video artists. Spring touring gets under way next week. Ballet Rambert will be at the Palace Theatre, Manchester, with two programmes and on Friday give the first performance of a new choreography by the American choreographer Dan Wagoner to a score by Michael Sahl with designs by Karen Schulz.

London Contemporary Dance Theatre will be at the Apollo Theatre, Oxford. They too have a premiere, a new work by Siobhan Davies which has its first performance on Thursday and is danced to Britten's Third Quartet.

Mary Clarke

### ROCK

The Convention of Hysteria (Diamonds Galas/Test Department/Evan Parker): Depford Albany Empire (tonight / Sat / Sun). A weekend retreat to test your musical endurance. Galas is a Greek-American who performs blood-curdling works for voice and tape. Parker is at the forefront of free music, and Test Department make an unholy din on metal.

Big Jay McNeely / Katie Webster Little Willie Littlefield et al. London Palladium (Sunday). Travelling Stars of Boogie Woogie revue in Britain for the first time. Rollie's fun show to be had by all. Smiley Culture: Norwood Nettlefold Hall. (Tonight). Leading the South London MC explosion in reggae with his hit. Police Officer, Smiley is back on some terms. Very Things / Big Flame / Ut Woolwich Tramshed (Tonight). The first named grew out of radical worthies The Cravats but offer a more daft diversion: sc-fi rockabilly from the Vale of Evesham. Strong support from displaced New Yorkers Ut and Mancunian garage funkies Flame.

Barney Hoskyns

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## Beyond the rhetoric of censure

Behind the human tragedy of yesterday's unemployment figures — a rise of 122,000 to a new record of 3.34 million unemployed — lies a Government policy which has reduced inflation to under 5 per cent, but which has otherwise failed to hit even the monetarist targets of its own creation. As Labour was not slow to point out in yesterday's censure debate, Britain has the highest unemployment on record, the highest real (after allowing for inflation) interest rates and the first deficit in manufactured goods since the industrial revolution. They could have added that the present increase in the money supply, and Government borrowing are still above the ceilings laid down for 1979/80 let alone the progressive reductions supposed to have happened thereafter. Unemployment is over two million higher without adding in all the people who have been dispatched to Government schemes or disqualified from being counted in the figures.

Mrs Thatcher yesterday blamed worries about oil prices and (ungrounded) fears in the financial markets that the Government was losing its resolve to curb inflation for the run on the pound. In fine, unrepentant, fettle she pointed to record capital investment, the fifth consecutive year in which there has been a current account surplus and the £25 billion invested abroad since 1979 which, far from depriving industry of funds, was earning a high return which would boost old age pensions. And on the small matter of 3 to 4 million unemployed she claimed that unemployment had more than doubled since 1978 in most European countries. True, but in Britain it has virtually trebled since the figure of 1.25 million inherited in 1979 once allowance has been made for under-recording. Where do we go from here?

The brute fact is that, after five years' hard monetarist slog, earnings are still rising at around twice the rate of inflation in the private sector. Such a high rate of earnings growth was never programmed into a monetarist model five years ago. Despite the continuing increase in unemployment there is still, perversely, strong upward pressure on earnings. The Treasury's solution is that if the rate of earnings growth were to be halved then an extra 300,000 new jobs would be created over the next four years. But how do you achieve the reduction in earnings, if 4 million unemployed is not enough? It sounds almost like a subconscious plea for an incomes policy.

The Government hasgrasped inflation down. But it happened in an unexpected way. Instead of earnings coming down, employers and unions acquiesced in a policy of keeping earnings high while shedding labour. This coincided with weak world commodity prices and fierce competitive pressures, which all helped to keep prices down along with the productivity increases resulting from shedding labour.

There appears to be widespread agreement, endorsed by the Treasury model, that more expansionary policies could be adopted if only wages could be restrained. This would lay genuine foundations for a sustainable non-inflationary growth with increased living standards for all. But, of course, Mrs Thatcher has already fractured the consensus with the unions on which such a policy could be based (and she, of course, wouldn't want it anyway). On the other side, Labour, whose economic policies are looking much more credible than four years ago, still has a gaping hole in the middle to fill — unless acceptance of an enduring policy for wages.

The unions must decide whether they want a prolonged policy of high unemployment with the Government hacking away at their monopoly powers to produce a "free" labour market. Or will they use their monopoly power (which, although diminished, is still formidable) in the national interest to boost output and employment?

The trouble is that those lucky enough to be in employment (particularly in the

private sector) have done surprisingly well out of the Thatcher experiment, which has produced a sustained rise in living standards. It is the poor and the unemployed who have been left in the ditch. There were 122,000 more of them in January. And there was scant comfort for them in yesterday's censure debate.

## One impulse to settle

Let us, for once, look at the pit strike from the point of view of the rational man in Whitehall or in Hobart House. Public opinion, according to all the polls, continues to run in favour of the government. The drift back to work continues. The National Union of Mineworkers has broadened its negotiating team and offered to meet the board without preconditions (what-ever that means). Anyone who watches the nightly Channel Four interviews with striking miners knows that the talk is no longer of total victory, still less of "Smashing Maggie" and, somehow, tearing down an entrenched Tory cabinet. The optimists among the strikers talk of going back "with heads held high." Of course Mr Arthur Scargill is playing a desperately thin hand with jack-in-the-box fervour. Of course, had something approaching victory been Mr Scargill's today, he would not have been looking for ways of easing ministerial pain. He would have been considering how best to rub some overnight noses in the coal dust.

Crudely, our rational Conservative or our rational manager might argue, we owe Arthur slightly less than nothing. Why ease him off the hook now? Why not stick it out until more than half the lads are back. Then, unless the union has already accepted unconditional surrender, you just declare the strike to be over. So much for the enemy within. It is if you are not into social consequences or the long term stability of industrial relations in the pits — a tempting scenario. Mr Scargill asked for it and Mr Scargill, eventually, got it. Let this be a lesson to all other putative

proletarian enemies within. End of story. To which (even within the deliberately one-sided and deeply biased framework we have set) the answer must be: Yes, but... The downside of going for unconditional surrender could yet be high. Hard nosed and coolly rational Conservative ministers would be well advised to consider that downside.

First there are the men from Nacods who keep the working pits on the road. They almost struck last autumn and they are restive again. If they could be persuaded (rightly or wrongly) that the board is going back on their deal, which offered an independent review of disputed pit closures, they might just cut up rough. They need to know that the board is not now in the business of shutting all pits which management deems to be "uneconomic." All this fluffing around doesn't help matters. Then there is the business of "isolating Arthur." Mr Scargill looked a sight more isolated on his executive a couple of weeks back than he does today. Hammering the union into the ground is the best way of re-uniting the executive round Mr Scargill — if only in defeat. The game plan was to divorce him from the seamy centre. Not to shove them into his open arms. When men like Sid Vincent and Trevor Bell sound off like militants, something is going wrong. Finally there are those opinion polls which finger Mr Scargill, decisively, as the Bad Guy. They do something else as well. They express continuing and profound popular distaste for the way in which Government and board have handled the dispute.

They reflect the view, however wet and muddled, that something more should be done. If ministers and board members now appear at best uncertain and at worst vindictive or slap happy, the mood could swing. It is still possible to snatch political defeat from the jaws of industrial victory. Better, by far, to get the mineworkers into the conference room and see what happens. If Mr Scargill still balks at the final hurdle, it would surely be possible to pin the blame where blame lies.

## The belfry brigadiers

In all the complaints against the Wildlife and Countryside Act one interest group

which has wisely remained silent is the British Bat lobby. The 15 species of British bat form a community which has rarely known such a privileged regime. Anyone buying a house where the bats arrived first will soon learn who the house belongs to. Not surprisingly, it is illegal to handle a bat, and not many people will wish to do so, but it is also illegal to disturb a bat while it is occupying "any structure or place." If natterjack toads are in occupation of the kitchen you can require them to leave, forcibly if necessary. If moles destroy the cabbage patch they can be biffed with a shovel. But if the bats have occupied the loft they have squatters' rights in perpetuity, and the specialist firm which treated the timbers for the new owner of a house at Grassington, North Yorkshire, was recently fined £1,000 for upsetting the colony of whiskered bats (200 of them according to the local paper) whose forebears had acquired rights to the property in 1856.

Though yielding to no-one in our high estimation of the bat we occasionally worry about the selective nature of the concern for wildlife. While the bat lobby is celebrating the first successful prosecution, scientists at the University of Illinois are licking their chops about a new herbicide they have invented whose beauty, in their eyes, is that it distorts the plant's ability to manufacture chlorophyll and so allows the plant to kill itself by the very sunlight which it relies on for its growth. (If the NFU comes to hear of it everyone on campus will be a millionaire, but let that pass). We get into deep trouble with readers when we try to sort out what animal rights consist of and we have no intention of opening another flank by hasty judgments of the philosophical status of the vegetable kingdom. If, on the other hand, there seems to be just a teary bit of inconsistency in the human stewardship or overlordship, of nature, perhaps no harm comes from saying so.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Hospital bed crisis—and they can't even blame the weather

Sir—Your report (January 30) on the shortage of acute beds for emergency admissions in London brings to a wider audience fears shared by many NHS workers for some time.

Your warning would have been more pointed, however, if—in outlining the delays experienced by the Emergency Bed Service—you had included the opinion of researcher Barry Evans that, for the average GP trying to arrange an emergency admission without EBS, the patient's transfer to hospital would be likely to be held-up for even longer.

Earlier this month, the service was forced to ask for the reduction of non-urgent admissions in order to ensure an adequate supply of beds for emergencies. While this improved the situation temporarily, it was at the expense of prolonging already lengthy waiting times for those needing non-urgent treatment, and the breathing-space gained appears to have been short lived.

Previously only influenza epidemics have been the cause of the kind of pressure London's hospitals are experiencing now. There is, however, no sign of a flu outbreak, and even the cold weather is not available to disguise the fact that it is the policy of cutting acute beds which has resulted in the present crisis.

Those in the DHSS and regional health authorities responsible for administering the policy of cuts still say that London is "over-provided" with acute beds and even feel the need to dis-

courage maximum use of the remaining beds.

It is at this time that the four Thames regional health authorities choose to review their support for the Emergency Bed Service. The message appears to be: patients, stay at home.—Yours sincerely, N. Bayley, 28 London Bridge Street, London SE1.

Sir—Your social services correspondent (January 30) is quite right to emphasise the difficulty of elderly ill patients receiving hospital care as a matter of urgency. The Department of Health emphasises that geriatrics should be treated as a priority service, but priorities often get watered down and changed before the point of implementation is reached.

District Health Authorities, in times of financial stringency seem unable to achieve redistribution of resources, and so the present Government's policy on devolution does not help. Thus Cinderella specialties remain Cinderella specialties.

Apart from the NHS being under-funded, finances are often grossly misused and mis-directed—often bonuses occur at the end of a financial year, money is often hastily and unwisely used.

What is necessary is for the Department of Health to monitor and make sure local pressures do not prevent the redistribution of admittedly limited resources.—Yours James Andrews, West Middlesex University Hospital, Isleworth, Middlesex.

### Fallacy of the affluent society

Sir—The Bishop of Derby is right to draw our attention to the attitudes and assumptions behind many of the policies being pursued by the Government and to lament the absence of compassion.

One of the assumptions being made today is that the poor will benefit if the rich are made more wealthy. It is one of the fundamental assumptions of an economic affluence. Drawing on the biblical tradition the Bishop might have shown that such an error is always dependent on a politics of injustice against which the prophets rallied.

In contrast the Christian tradition points to the need

to develop an economics of sharing which assumes that the poor will only benefit when the wealthy are content to share with the poor as their neighbour. Such an economics is dependent upon a politics of justice and compassion.

In the policies being pursued by the present administration there is very little to suggest that they spring from an economics of sharing and a politics of justice and compassion. They belong rather to the economics and politics of the pharaohs of Egypt and to the broken and declining Kingdom of Israel.—Yours faithfully, (The Rev.) J. M. Anslin, Church Action on Poverty, Salford, Lancashire.

### Miscellany in memoriam

Sir—I cannot recall ever being so affected by the death of someone whom I had never met as I was by the news of the death of James Cameron (Guardian, January 28).

The tributes from those who did know him depict exactly the sort of man one would have expected from his writing. He had the priceless gift of giving you the feeling that he was addressing you personally as a friend.

It is hard to think that it will no longer be any use looking for his column each Tuesday. Your paper and all your readers will be the poorer for that.—Yours faithfully, Alexander D. Morris, Leatherhead, Surrey.

Sir—The death of James Cameron has filled me with sorrow and dismay. The country can ill afford to lose a man of his humanity and compassion, qualities all too rarely given voice in these days of fashionable right-wing self-interest.—Yours, Gail J. Rickie, London SW16.

Sir—For the death of James Cameron, Monday morning sorrow and tears on a dismal train to work, not what he would have wished or expected, I am sure. For Martin Woolacott, thanks that he had put into his superb tribute, precisely what one dreaded one day having to read. How can a man have been your friend and adviser, when you never met him? Now who will deflate our egos and worry our consciences?—Yours A.M. Tucker, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire.

Sir—We are just ordinary folk: newspaper readers who have had the great good fortune to find James Cameron in the Picture Post and News Chronicle years ago.

We followed him to the Guardian where his every article was a joy to our hearts and souls. He was read with the same affection that we would feel for a personal friend — and his untimely departure we feel as keenly.

Journalism can ill afford such a loss. We none of us can...—Yours sincerely, Les and June Nicholson, Surbiton, Surrey.

Sir—James Cameron said: "Few of us are beloved enough to be missed for more than a couple of days or so." May I affirm that, for me at any rate, James Cameron was, emphatically and unquestionably, one of the few.—Yours sincerely, R. J. Chaffield, St Albans, Hertfordshire.

Sir—I am sure that James Cameron would not wish to stand uncorrected. It was not Hilaire Belloc but Arthur Hugh Clough who wrote: "Thou shalt not kill; but needst not strive to beat the updated Ten Commandments." (The Latest Decalogue).

Let this pedantic correction of Cameron's last article be my tribute to that brave and honest man.—Yours, Patrick O'Sullivan, Bradford, W. Yorkshire.

Sir—Done it again James and we still love you! How are you explaining it up there to Cloughie? L. T. Stewart, Leek, Staffordshire.

## Praise be to the civilian fighters against fascism

Sir—Surely it is possible to acknowledge the struggle and sacrifice of the Russian people and their crucial contribution to the military defeat of Hitler without closing one's eyes to the appalling nature of Stalinist tyranny and the shameful acts that took place during the period of the German-Soviet cooperation?

Thus whatever Soviet motives for signing the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, and however great the responsibility of Britain and France in not taking a firm stand earlier against nazism and fascism, the fact remains that the pact did simplify Hitler's calculations in his military conquests in 1939 and 1940 (see letters from Vic Jones and H. Koning, Guardian, January 26).

Moreover, the Soviet Union was at least a propaganda accomplice in Hitler's conquests during the period denouncing not these acts of aggression but the "senseless and criminal war" (ie the war by Britain and France against Germany) — camouflaged as a fight for democracy.

This line was echoed, with whatever private misgivings, by Communist par-

ties outside the Soviet Union, even though after June 1941 Communists played an heroic and in many instances leading role in the resistance movements to Nazi occupation in Europe.

The fact that the Baltic States, Finland and the area that formed part of Eastern Poland in the inter-war years were part of the Tzarist empire before the Russian revolution is not a convincing plea, even in mitigation, for Stalin's actions in these areas in 1939-40. Finland's courageous winter war saved it from annexation (though it had to cede some territory), but in the Baltic States and Eastern Poland were successfully taken over.

Stalin carried out a policy of political repression and mass deportation on a staggering scale. The socialist historian, Adam Ciolek, puts at 1,230,000 the number of Polish citizens deported (over and above 250,000 soldiers of the Polish army who were arrested and interned). Most were released after the German attack on the Soviet Union, but 200,000 of them disappeared. Leading Polish socialists were among those arrested and executed.

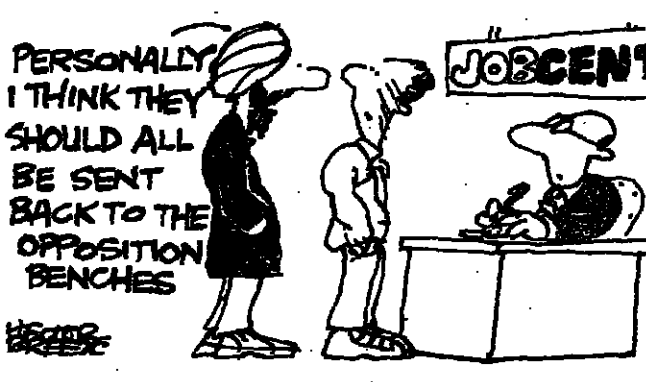
### An imprimatur on the vocabulary of racism

Sir—Margaret Thatcher's Thames TV interview (TV Eye, January 24) should leave us all worried and distressed. The Prime Minister's attitudes to and her arguments about the miners' strike, unemployment, the sinking pound, investment, etc., can be written off as a covert party political broadcast. But one issue — slipped in, not stressed by her voice becoming the well-known expression of deeply felt passion and honest conviction — deserves to be highlighted and universally condemned.

I am referring to her comments on the Germans and the "Japs", and her theory that West Germany's economic boom is due to the fact that she had been able to send her immigrants home, whereas this country could not do so.

The Prime Minister's use of the word "Jap" gives respectability to the derogatory terms of "Jingoism" and "racism". Such vocabulary has its roots in attempts to portray members of a nation as inferior, alien and dangerous.

The second case not only endorses racist prejudices but also encourages racist attitudes and thereby racist behaviour. The "unfortunate" fact that Britain cannot send her immigrants home is



made the scapegoat for economic decline. Peter G. Jungius, Bradford, W. Yorkshire.

Sir—Your Leader (January 28) on TV Eye's Racial Offences programme strikes a chord of assent in me. Not only did the programme misrepresent the extent and ugliness of racism in East End council estates, but completely distorted the National Council for Civil Liberties' position. The council is only seeking the right to set the record straight.

The programme concerned a court action against tenants who signed a petition inducing the GLC to discriminate in housing a Bengali family.

It is true that I expressed the necessary civil liberties caution whenever freedom of access of individuals to elected representatives is affected. But both the beginning and end of my answer were cut, giving the false impression that NCCL did not support the objectives of the Commission for Racial Equality.

The CRE is charged with enforcing the Race Relations Act, and it was absolutely right to take legal steps to prevent unlawful inducement to discriminate. I have made clear to its legal advisers that it can expect NCCL's determined support.

Larry Gostin, National Council for Civil Liberties, London SE1.

The most cynical act of all took place on the bridge at Brest-Litovsk in January 1940 on the demarcation line between German and Soviet occupied Poland, when the Gestapo and NKVD exchanged refugees from each other's regimes. Many of those deported from the Soviet side were German Jews and Communists who faced imprisonment or death at the hands of the Gestapo. This was "accommodation" with a vengeance.

Finally, I hope that the celebration of the defeat of nazism and fascism will not focus solely on the military aspect of that defeat, or be the occasion for encouraging further military build-ups. Tribute should also be paid to those thousands of civilians in occupied Europe who helped to thwart Hitler's political goal of creating a New Order through their non-cooperation and other acts of unarmed resistance—like the students in Leiden and Delft in Holland in 1940 who went on strike when Jewish lecturers were dismissed, the teachers in Norway who successfully refused to cooperate with Quisling's plans to introduce a Nazi-style curriculum in

the schools in 1942, the participants in the "people's strikes" in many parts of Denmark in 1943, the underground network that succeeded in getting 95 per cent of Jews out of Denmark to safety in Sweden.

It is surely a possibility that without their struggle, fascism as a political force might have been a much more formidable problem in the post-war period.—Yours sincerely, Michael Randle, 136 Hollingwood Close, Bradford, West Yorkshire.

Sir—I agree that we owe a tremendous debt to the Soviet people and that we should have cooperated with the Soviet Union against Germany in the 1930s. However, although I don't know about Poland, Mr Jones and Mr Koning (Letters, January 26) are wrong about Finland.

Soviet recognition of Finnish independence, which came about at least in part through a reaction to the Tzarist policy of Russification, meant that Finland's former membership of the Tzarist empire — whatever the position of Finland's borders might have been in Tzarist days — was irrele-

vant in 1939 when Stalin whose attitude to humanity does not appear to have been one of unalloyed benevolence, attempted to solve Soviet problems by creating Finnish ones.

It is insufficient to say in Stalin's defence that Finnish-Soviet relations between 1917 and 1939 were characterised by initially military hostility. The Soviet Union might have been doing us a favour by invading Finland, although I doubt it — but that is not how the Finns look at it.

Moreover, the speed of the German-Finnish advance in 1941 suggests that the Soviet policy of establishing forward positions was a failure. The roll-call of Soviet dead might have been shorter had the Soviet Union been better prepared for war, and had Stalin not adopted his initial policy of allowing his armies to be encircled.

It is also arguable that the Soviet Union would not have invaded Germany had not Germany foolishly invaded her first. The fact that the Soviet Union bled its out was therefore an accident.—Yours faithfully, Erik Williams, 14 Lucas Street, Cardiff.

### Miscellany at large

Sir—Some years ago a very able minister resigned having been less than truthful about a sexual matter. Later we in Britain found it difficult to understand how a US President could continue in office after it was proved he had made untrue statements.

We now find that the sinking of the Belgrano was surrounded by terminological inexactitudes and suspect that the Prime Minister's insistence that the settlement of the miners' strike was a matter between the Coal Board and the NUM was not wholly truthful.

I for one look for a return to Victorian standards of honesty in public life.—Yours faithfully, Dudley Cave, London NW11.

Sir—Bill Moore (Letters, January 28), has completely missed my point. Labour governments set aside conference resolutions because in many cases they were — and are — totally unworkable. The SDP takes its policy decisions much more seriously: we don't make promises we

know can't be kept.—Yours sincerely, (Mrs) Shirley Williams, London W1.

Sir—At the end of the day, Mr Scargill must discuss the closure of uneconomic pits, but when he does, he proves ineffective. A third party will inevitably be needed to adjudicate. How about the Hebbwornall Council of my old university. Or, being asked to fill this role?—Yours faithfully, C. Wickham-Jones, Stockton-on-Tees.

Sir—In answer to Mr Pritchard (Letters, January 24) we "punters" are up the creek without a paddle, all at sea, exploring uncharted waters. Sink-or-swim times, these.—Yours, etc, Cecilia L. Powell, Waltham Abbey, Essex.

Sir—Apologies Argentine lookings prob. Athens (Df, January 30) stop pref. pat. resemblance Asti celeb. colonel (South Georgia April 82). Chris Morrell, Aberystwyth, Dyfed.

### Competing in the mph market

Sir—It was revealed recently on the BBC Checkpoint programme that the Government is considering the application of cost-benefit analysis to questions of safety regulations.

In the light of this new perspective, surely the question of an 80mph limit on the motorways can be subjected to rather better analysis than we have seen so far. For any car, average mpg figures can be derived from various speeds by combining the speed data with associated fuel consumption. One can derive an hourly cost for travelling at any particular speed. This cost can then be compared with the value of the driver's time and an optimum speed can be calculated. Without boring you with

the calculations, it is cost effective for someone earning the average national wage to drive a Vauxhall Cavalier at 82 mph. A driver earning £15,500 should drive at 105 mph, while someone earning £4,000 would be better sticking to 55 mph. If the driver is eligible for a "Gold Card" (or if there are two wage earners in the car) it would be most effective to go as fast as possible.

By comparison with the amount of money tied up in working hours lost compared with the cost of fuel, the cost of funerals, widows' benefit and all the rest can be safely ignored as marginal. T. D. Nathan, 119 High St, Sawston, Cambs.

## OLIVER TWIST?



The weekly for people with minds of their own. Every Friday, 80p.

Echoes of the Victorian workhouse in this week's New Statesman, as we expose the scandal of 2½ million children working illegally in Britain today.

Plus the move to the right at Cambridge University, Roman Catholic influence on American foreign policy, the EPTU after Frank Chappell, and much, much more.

New Statesman

Sir—I am sure that James Cameron would not wish to stand uncorrected. It was not Hilaire Belloc but Arthur Hugh Clough who wrote: "Thou shalt not kill; but needst not strive to beat the updated Ten Commandments." (The Latest Decalogue).

Let this pedantic correction of Cameron's last article be my tribute to that brave and honest man.—Yours, Patrick O'Sullivan, Bradford, W. Yorkshire.

### A COUNTRY DIARY

AVON: A solitary goat is an unhappy goat. And the bleat of an unhappy goat is an endlessly repeated variation on a single tone which can unfailingly reach the human ear through all the hours from before dawn to beyond dusk if you are within a quarter mile radius of the complaining beast. The magic cure to unappealing bleats in the goat is the addition of a second goat. All becomes silence and contentment and the very occasional bleat serves only to remind you of the mind-nagging chorus which it was your misfortune to suffer before the solitude which makes for misery gave way to the company which gives contentment. All of which I can tell you on the basis of the experience of our farmer neighbour who sought to provide a replacement activity for his young family when an unexplained virus infection led to sudden mortality in the chicken house. When trusting little souls toddling off in their red wellies to collect eggs were likely to find the odd pecked and bedraggled corpse as well, he felt it was time to replace the hens with a goat. It was the first young kid which gave us all the experience I recount above. The farmer confided to me that he could envisage expansion in which

he would produce goat's milk yoghurt and be besieged by eager customers. In Laura Ashley dresses and sandals who would enviously about the nutritional and health-giving properties of such a culture: if this were to prove the case then the 5 a.m. rise for early milking could become a thing of the past and he would go in for goats in a big way. This marketing dream has not come to pass but the two white goats in the small paddock below the orchard, now from our back garden, now enjoy their verdant enclosure in almost unbroken silence.

COLLIN LUCKHURST







Fish is one of our prime national assets, so why don't we eat it fresher and more often? Christopher Driver goes trawling for some answers.

## Fingering the fish



drawing of Christopher Driver by Chris Carr for Fish in London, a visual anthology devised by students of the Royal College of Art (1980)

"Gaze upon the rolling deep (Fish is plentiful and cheap) As the sea my love is deep. Said the Yonky-Bonky-Bo."

Coal is not the only major British resource which has lost its home public. We still sometimes see ourselves as a nation of fishermen, the last of the hunter-gatherers. Since the recent agreement on 200-mile limits, we actually own — as an island nation with a long coastline — more sea than we do land. But possession breeds contempt. The average British household eats a pound of fresh fish once every five weeks.

In all regions except Scotland and Border this modest consumption is equalled or surpassed by the frozen variety, but even so, just over 50c per person per week is not much fish to set against the comparable figure for all meat and poultry — 860c.

Very few British housewives have a fishmonger within walking distance. Anglers and professionals apart, very few people under the age of 40 have ever handled a fish of any kind with a view to meeting it at table later.

Has fish touched bottom, then? Perhaps. In the past two years, with meat producers fretting visibly at sliding sales, fish has risen slightly. No thanks to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, who put almost all their resources into land farming: little thanks to MAF's quango, the Sea Fish Industry Authority, who know how to catch fish but have scarcely begun to learn how to sell it; no thanks to the *gras poissons* of the industry itself, who from a consumer's point of view show every sign of exchanging old bad practices for new worse ones.

The upturn began with a few retailers — some in shops, some in vans — who realised that fish did not have to be as stale as Britons expect (even by the seaside), and that while a butcher's window is *nature morte*, a good fishmonger's is pure theatre.

There is usually a queue of wartime dimensions at Whitehead's shop in East Finchley, north London, where the gleam in customers' eyes matches the glint of the ice and the iridescence of the colours. Most people seem to know precisely the supper they have in mind: carppe à la

juive, salmon sashimi, moules à la crème, calamars fritos. If they don't, Albert Scott may press them to try one of his Technicolor Seychelles imports: croissant, bourgeois, Job jaune, vieille maconne, though it is still true that the best fish swims in the coldest water.

The success of a fishmonger like this (and Whitehead's is not unique, there is a shop in Hammersmith market that sells cookery books as well as fish) usually lies in the diversity of its clientele. In North London, Jewish entertainers, Japanese diplomatic wives, Arabs from the Gulf, and green grocers from Cyprus are all equal in the fish queue.

Native English often need a more delicate approach. Mr Scott has one customer who had never previously looked on a fish in the west until, new to the district, she saw the ice-creams and the crabs and the seaweed decoration and was hooked by a lemon sole.

Receptivity to something different has had to be preached upon the public by the fishing industry and its quangos for a decade now, beginning with the entirely predictable failure of British bluster in the Icelandic cod wars, and culminating last year not only with EEC agreement on access and allocation within the Common Fisheries Policy, but with the revival of the herring.

But campaigns and strategies to steer public taste towards fish in general or fish in particular are not easily mounted. Fish is specifically excluded from MAF's Food from Britain export initiative. And the Sea Fish Industry Authority, like the industry it represents, advises and subsidises, has always been oriented towards the species that consume; fleets, not markets.

Since the lamented early death of the cookery writer Marika Hanbury Tenison, the Authority's own membership has been a shopping bag, and the inbuilt prickliness between north and south Britons has not always made life easy for new executive brooms supposed to know something about marketing a product south of the Trent.

But if the SFIA's present chief executive, John Richmond, and his marketing director, Robert Kennedy, can lift the herring out of the North Sea and back into the nation's pans, they should have little trouble thereafter flogging huss, catfish, and "goggle-eyed monsters of the deep," as a fisheries spokesman imprudently called them some years ago.

Consider, herring, because they are oily fish, cure and smoke superbly but do not freeze well. For the same reason, they appeal more strongly to robust appetites (medieval and early modern England kept alive on them) than to people already surfeited by, and anxious about, other sources of richness in their diet. As bony fish, both their preparation and consumption are best learnt at first hand at mother's elbow, not from advertisements or cookery books. The smell and residues are more pleasing to cats than to small children. Their price advantage over farmed, tasteless rainbow trout is not conspicuous. And

their flesh is dark, in a society which appears to like its protein either white or dyed.

In other words, only a very optimistic advertising man would set out to sell such fish by the million without the active support of live, trained and imaginative fishmongers, backed by good market handling — in other words, an infrastructure capable of putting unfamiliar near-water fish at peak of freshness into the hands of customers who would know how to treat them.

Not that freshness at point of sale has ever been a prime consideration throughout the fish trade. For instance, there are still plenty of fish shops in Hull, where I visited the other day, the SFIA Industrial Development Unit's 155,000 gallon flume tank — one of the most advanced in the world — for the simulation of trawl behaviour in open sea. I then viewed various shop windows some of the staid fish I have seen in a while. Dependent on distant fishing grounds and fortnight-old haddock, the town acquired a taste for it.

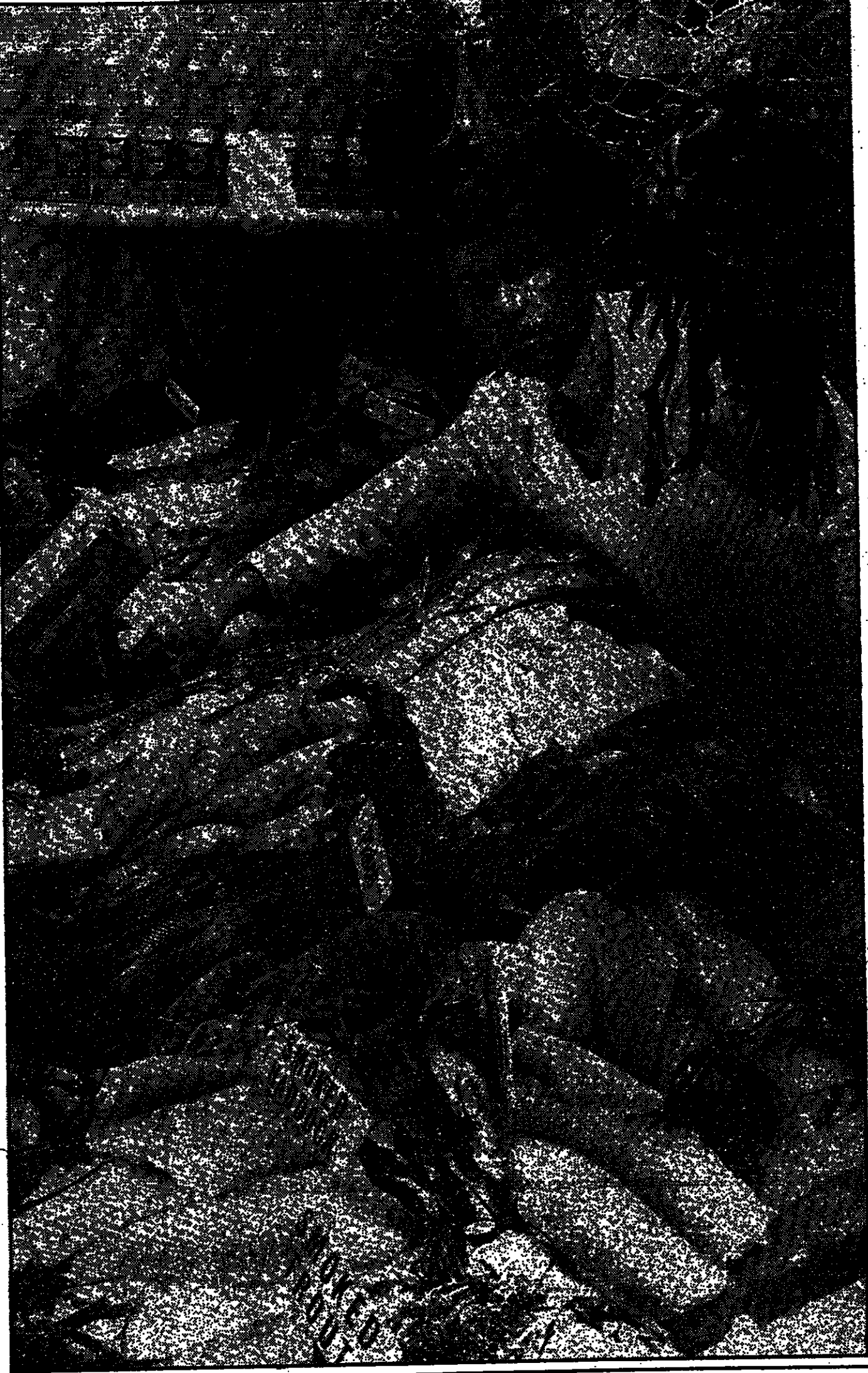
You don't even have to be trained at all to sell fish, apparently because fish — unlike meat — does not actually poison you when it's off. According to Alan Hopper, the SFIA unit's director, 90 per cent of the fish landed by British vessels now spends less than five days in the hold, but not everyone who handles it thereafter understands the crucial elements of temperature and time.

The buying power of the six big multiple stores could secure better shore-to-shelf handling. The training process involved could itself create jobs, as well as saving for added-value sale some of the species that now go to eastern Europe or the fish-meal industry at £120 a ton. (Ever eaten *lancons* — sand-eels — in Dieppe or Boulogne quayside restaurants? In Britain, over 80,000 tonnes of sand-eels went to feed broiler chickens last year.) One shrewd London butcher, Wainwright and Daughters, who introduced fresh fish into their stores, discovered that it was more lucrative than meat, proportionately to the selling area occupied.

But at present, only just ten per cent of the fresh fish landed goes to the multiples, and it is these stores' runaway success with distant-water frozen fillets, and now with mock-fish of the kind described elsewhere on this page, that has deprived a whole generation of British housewives of the tastes and crafts which passed from their grandmothers to their mothers — and stopped there.

In the "gourmet supermarkets" of yuppie suburbs in American cities, fresh fish and shellfish are sold successfully from invitingly theatrical display cabinets. But most British supermarket executives are still too nervous of the small to expose fish for sale without a veil of plastic film, like the books stocked by illiterate newscasters. They should buy Albert Scott back as a consultant (except that I would miss him). His shop smells as good as it looks.

Albert Scott: picture by Martin Scott



### White wines for fish courses

The marriage of wine and food is often tricky, and it is somehow difficult to find white wines, where the possibilities are so wide-ranging. The grape from which the wine is made matters of course, as does its degree of sweetness. But equally important is the method of vinification: traditionally made wine aged in oak will differ markedly from one which has undergone cool fermentation and spent its early life in stainless steel.

Add to these variables your own considerations of cost and the particular meal to be matched, and you have a complex if fascinating task. The wine trade wrings its collective hands over customers' failure to appreciate Alsace wines. Our neglect is certainly hard to understand, since these wines represent splendid value for money: they are among the most consistent of any, and they have the instant appeal of fragrance and fruitiness. People often confuse this aromatic fruitiness with sweet-

ness, but Alsace wines are traditionally fermented out: there is no residual sugar. Pierre Sparr's Gewurztraminer 1982 has a scented nose and a richly spiced, fruity taste. It serves usefully as an aperitif and also with a smoked fish first course.

The 1983 vintage, said to equal the superb 1976, should be available in a few months. Attractive now, both wines will be even better in three or four years' time (Barwell & Jones in East Anglia; Buckley's Brewery, Llanelli; Tipples, Castle Douglas, Dumfries & Galloway; £2.25 to £3.85. Also Les Vins de France, 13 rue Nationale, Boulogne).

Gewurztraminer and Muscat (another Alsace grape) are blended to make Vins d'Alsace 1983, from Torres.

The mountains behind the Catalan coast are high enough to let these northern grapes keep their characteristic spice and fragrance, though Esmeralda is not completely dry. It thus makes an excellent winter aperitif when a dash of sweetness is welcome, and it would go well with a dish of scallops or sole, perhaps done in a light sauce based on cream and the wine itself. (Henry Townsend,

Beaconsfield, Bucks; Tanners of Shrewsbury, Victoria Wine, about £3.)

To Tuscany next, for Vernaccia di San Gimignano, said to be Michelangelo's favourite. As he knew it, it was a powerful golden wine, redolent of nuts and honey. Some are still made in that style, but most producers aim for something lighter.

One which has got the balance right is San Quirico 1983, which has a pronounced, almost earthy bouquet, and enough character and fruit to be interesting. It is dry, rich, and has an impressively long finish. It would be at home with any plain, unambitious fish, but it has enough spine to stand up to a tomato-based sauce in the Provencal, Portuguese or Neapolitan manner. (Wine Growers' Association in London, Brighton and Norwich; just over £3, as part of a case.)

We don't drink enough German wines to please the wine trade either.

One convinced advocate of tradition is Greiffrisch, whose family have owned estates in Winkel since the 12th century. Schloss Vollrad, their leading property, produces distinguished Rieslings with a balance of fruit and acidity but markedly less

sweetness than their fellow Rheingaus.

The Graf shows his concern over matching his wines to food by putting on "Lucullan evenings" (his phrase) where guests are urged to assess various combinations. He runs a restaurant in Winkel which serves local dishes with the small to expose fish for sale without a veil of plastic film, like the books stocked by illiterate newscasters. They should buy Albert Scott back as a consultant (except that I would miss him). His shop smells as good as it looks.

Our last two wines are down-upon challengers. The first is a fine fresh Sauvignon Blanc which would be impressive if it were the most recent vintage from the Loire and which seems to discover that it was made in New Zealand in 1982. Montau Sauvignon Blanc is grown on the cool north-west tip of South Island. The 1983 has lost a little of its joltingly beautiful fruitiness but is still distinctive and delicious. Little of the 1983 vintage was exported — New Zealanders knew a good thing when they saw it — but the 1984 will be available shortly. At a tasting last autumn, barely six months old, it was dazzlingly fresh and clean, and would be an irresistible match for a grilled mackerel or any other strongly flavoured fish. (Selfridges, London W1, 1982 and 1983, £3.70; Oddbins, £2.99.)

White Burgundy is prohibitively expensive now, and it is encouraging to find excellent Chardonnays at more modest prices from other parts of the world. It was a novel experience to taste Australia's Rosemount Chardonnay 1984 last autumn before Beaujolais Nouveau had been released.

The Upper Hunter Valley produces wines which are enjoyable both when young and with considerable bottle-age. The 1982, for example, already reveals a tropical-fruit aroma and a firm, fruity flavour with overtones of oak. Either the 1982 or the 1983 would be well worth trying alone or with a fine fish — poached salmon comes to mind — and the 1984 vintage will replace them shortly. (Alderly, London NW8 & Halesworth, Suffolk; Elliot Winebrokers, Alderly Edge, Cheshire; selected branches of Peter Dominici; about £4.80 as part of a case.)

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### GOOD FOOD GUIDE

#### Pushing the boat out



Fish is expensive in restaurants, but in the better kitchens it becomes the benchmark by which serious chefs judge their selves. Fish needs all the basic skills of the trade — shopping, judgment (fish fryers of the old school talk of going to market for three years as apprentices before being allowed to fry), the organisation to ensure a daily throughput of good ingredients, the cooking (where a minute either way can be crucial) and service (because on a hot plate fish goes on cooking).

Sheekies is very much in the old school of London ordinaries, with pictures of people who were famous 30 years ago and waiters who still

seem a bit surprised to find women dining out at all. There is a splendid oyster bar but also a range of the classic dishes from sole stuffed with artichoke to casserole scallops. The grill is excellent either with a mustard grain sauce or else, more traditionally, with spinach, cream and mushrooms. With a bottle of house Blanc de Blancs three courses will run to just under £20 a head.



Fish is also a speciality at the best of the new restaurants in Glasgow, The Buttery. This is an isolated grey stone building that looks even more imposing from the inside, and seems to get older as you progress from the bar to the inner clutch of wood-paneled dining rooms. Here the Scottish scallops with a Noddy Prat and herb sauce and the lemon sole with watercress and lime butter arrive under silver domes which are ceremoniously lifted at the table. Fernier Richard-

son prefers to cook in the modern way using unusual fish — red mullet, bismarck, and a pairing of sea bream and sea bass — dressed, crumbed, or with a hazelnut mayonnaise. A full meal might be £20 but the service makes you feel like it was worth it. Outing waiters even know what all the cheeses were.

On the other hand, if these sound expensive, always Brach is headlining where the hake and the haddock are fresh daily, the chips are fried in beef dripping and they brew a good pot of tea too... all for about £2.

DETAILS: Sheekies, 28 St. Martin's Court, London WC2. Tel (01) 240 2565. The Buttery, 654 Argyle Street, Glasgow. Tel Glasgow (041) 221 8188. Brach's, 9 Westwood Lane, Huddersley, Tel Leeds (0532) 765079.

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Drew Smith

#### In the pink

A FINAL (fishy) extract from *Pasta for Pleasure*, by Moyra Brennan and Liz Filippini (Fantana, £2.95): Spaghetti alla peraseca

Borgo Peri is the fishermen's quarter of Genoa, a maze of little alleys which, until not long ago, was permeated by wonderful smells wafting from street-vendors' stalls: fried fish, artichokes, pizza, fresh pies and heaps of jet-black olives. That feature of Genoa has unfortunately disappeared, but this delicate, pale pink fish sauce is still made by the fishermen's wives. A first course or a light lunch for 4-5.

500g (18 oz) spaghetti or linguine  
1 garlic clove, chopped  
1 handful chopped parsley  
350g (12 oz) hound fish or cod  
slices  
100g (4 oz) fresh or tinned tomatoes, skinned and chopped  
4 tablespoons good olive oil  
a few black olives (optional)

Put a large pan of salted water to boil for the pasta. Soften the garlic and parsley gently in the oil, add the fish and tomatoes. Season to taste and simmer, covered, for 8-10 minutes, until the fish is cooked. Take from the heat, and remove all bones and skin from the fish. Sieve the sauce and puree it in a blender to make a smooth thick cream. Warm this in the pan, and adjust the seasoning, adding also a little water if it is too thick, while you cook the pasta. Drain the pasta when at dente, place in a warm bowl and top with the sauce, a sprinkling of parsley, and a fine drizzle of olive oil. Decorate with the olives and serve with extra pepper but no cheese.

Colin Spencer's column has been held over and will appear with True Love and John Arlott next week. A *Money* Page will also appear later this month.

Christopher Driver: Food and wine editor

### OFFCUTS

#### Gut issues

EIGHT years ago, Robbie Blair came within a fin of taking the late Tony Crosland's Grimby by-election that put Austin Mitchell into Parliament, and unless Nicholas Fairbairn is handy with a filleting knife, he may well remain the only Conservative candidate with the guts to gut a fish with his Thatcher-looking eyes. He is now associate director of the Humber-side centre for fisheries studies, and a genial saviour of the extraordinary imbalance between land and sea in both British and European research and development. Three months ago he split a few thoughts on these lines to an international seafood conference in London.

"The land area of the world is producing about 3 billion

tons of food to the oceans' 30 million tons. Since all food production originates from photosynthesis — the process by which plants and algae convert the sun's energy into food — there can be no inherent reason why we could not ultimately obtain as much food from the waters as from the land.

"Think of all that business. But most governments have come to regard the fishery products industry as at best a bit of a nuisance and at worst an expendable joke. Britain is one of the worst offenders. And the European Community allocates over 14 billion ECUs — some two thirds of its budget — to agriculture, and less than 100 million ECUs to fisheries.

"In Britain, we need to shift the whole basis of our approach to fisheries education and research from 'how to catch the fish more efficiently' to 'how to farm the waters more intelligently'. Who would have believed ten years ago that Norway expects to be exporting by 1987 more from farmed salmon

than from the traditional cod catch?

#### Fish alive

IT WILL be no news to readers of Alan Davidson's indispensable books on the sea-food of the Mediterranean and the north Atlantic that other European nations, or some regions within them, seize any chance they are given to eat a wider range of shellfish than any Briton is likely to see outside an aquarium — even if the molluscs, crustacea and gastropods concerned are found in our own waters.

For instance, a recent SFIA market research trawl to Galicia — the north-west corner of Spain, traditionally preoccupied with *mariscos* — identified five different species of crab (brown, spider, velvet, shore, and swimming) and half a dozen species of clam which fishmongers and bar-operators hungered for, along with other exotica from the murex to the goose barnacle. The profits which this type of market puts within range of a well-instructed British



Robbie Blair wielding the knife

July 1985



# Is Lawson just acting the tough guy, or does he perhaps know something we don't



## NOTEBOOK

Hamish McRae

**THE BANKS** wanted 1 per cent off base rates. The City Court houses wanted at least 13 per cent. The authorities wanted to keep rates where they were. Do they know something that everyone else doesn't?

In fact, that is one explanation for the delay. That next week's money supply figures will be bad, and given the Chancellor's recent reiteration that he wanted to see money supply well into the target range, that would at least be consistent.

But there are other explanations which would focus on the public relations need to avoid any action that might unsteadily sterling in the middle of the House of Commons debate. You could see, too, some sense in avoiding a cut in base rates before the German Bundesbank increased its Lombard rate by 1 per cent.

But when all that is said the refusal of the authorities to sanction the cut in base rates leaves us in the invidious position where today Treasury bill tender will presumably see the government raising money a clear 14 per cent above market rates. Meanwhile, too, the clearing

banks are in the happy position of running much larger margins than they can normally manage to achieve.

This situation cannot last, nor should the government attempt to try to make it do so. Just as it makes no sense to try to hold bank interest rates significantly below the level at which the market wants to see them, it equally makes no sense to hold them artificially high. You can perhaps understand the Chancellor's determination to appear tough after the bruising couple of weeks. That desire would explain all his extended nautical metaphors about "battering down the hatches" and "ship remaining on course" at that newspaper lunch on Wednesday.

That turn of phrase is presumably a reference to the heretofore unbroken tradition of a pound sterling which you wouldn't catch Paul Volcker rabbiting away about equals and he runs a pretty tight monetary policy.

Come to think of it the Swiss don't go on about keeping their rates parallel or bending as knees.

All this spout of tough talk is misplaced. There is no monetary reason for present interest rates. Base rates at 12 per cent, with inflation at around 5 per cent are perfectly high enough for any conceivable requirement of domestic monetary restraint. Indeed, looking at yesterday's unemployment figures, the underlying instinct of the government — to nudge rates as low as possible — is absolutely right.

In short, it is just as short-sighted to block the markets' desire to cut interest rates as it is to block their desire to increase them. Besides, most corporate borrowings are at money market rates so the whole process is slightly self-defeating anyway.

So the authorities should not sniff at the markets' drive to cut base rates — unless, that is, they know something the rest of us don't.

**Arcane skill**

SOME BAD news from the futures markets: the gold market has given up the struggle and closed.

The London Gold Futures market, to give it its full name, the first hybrid City market, a fore-runner, if you like, of the more successful financial futures market, and indeed of the whole blurring of barriers now taking place in the securities markets.

Though London has, with some patchy periods, remained along with Zurich, the main world bullion dealing centre, it was North America which pioneered gold futures. London firms normally deal spot and will quote forward on individual deals. But in the late 1970s,

when the gold price soared to what then (and now) seemed extraordinary levels, there was a demand from users to be able to cover their needs forward on a significant scale. Gold futures markets sprang up in Winnipeg, Chicago, Singapore, Sidney and Hong Kong, as well as in New York. Come, in New York, became the world's largest gold futures market.

London was at a disadvantage, because the bullion market was located in the merchant banks' while the futures dealing expertise rested in the commodity markets. So in 1979 the bullion houses and the London Metal Exchange (which runs the "hard" commodity markets) decided to look at the possibility of breaking the taboo that separated them, and joining to set up a futures market.

The trouble was that it did not get trading until 1982,

when interest in gold had rather flagged, and worse, it started dealing in the wrong contract — in sterling. Gold is normally quoted in dollars. The argument for using sterling was that gold futures trading in dollars was overcrowded and London ought to differentiate itself. This failed and after a few months the contract was switched to dollars.

Things improved a bit, but the continued lack of interest in gold trading itself was clearly undermining the whole concept. And so came yesterday's news.

There are several interesting lessons in this tale. The first is the well-known one that for a futures market to be successful you have to have very sharp price movements in the underlying commodity (that commodity, as financial futures have shown, may be interest rates or exchange rates.)

The second is that it is

terribly important to get in first. Despite London's advantage in the time-zones, being ahead of New York and (just) able to link in with the Far East trading centres, other markets had achieved critical mass and simply provided a better service.

Not just as to currency, but also size and definition. The third is to get the contract right. This is a strange, arcane skill. You have only to look at LIVER to see that some contracts have proved winners, while others have been mediocre. And there is no easy way of picking winners — you have to act almost by instinct.

And finally, there is a lesson in the fact that our barriers between different institutions can damage London's international competitiveness as a financial marketplace. This is a small example, perhaps. But it points to a bigger moral.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Dunlop hits back

BTR, the industrial combine which holds a veto grip over the future of Dunlop, pointedly failed to defend its controversial tactics when it issued its 532 million share bid to Dunlop shareholders last night.

By acquiring 28 per cent of Dunlop's preference shares BTR has denied other shareholders the chance to approve Dunlop's financial reconstruction package on February 8. BTR's chairman, Sir Owen Green, merely warned Dunlop shareholders that their current investment had "little intrinsic value" and was only supported by BTR's 21.7p a share offer. Dunlop shares fell 1p to 384p last night.

The Dunlop chairman, Sir Michael Edwards, described BTR's preference share purchase as a "shabby device" and urged shareholders to reject the "ludicrous" offer. In a confidential letter to employees, Sir Michael also warned that a BTR victory could bring redundancies from "product and factory rationalisation". He urged the workforce to mount a campaign for Dunlop's independence and promised "to channel investment much more into the UK in the next few years."

SIR Francis Tombs, who resigned from the Electricity Council in 1980, is returning to the subsidiary, Leyland, as chairman of the state-owned aircraft engine builder, Rolls-Royce. Sir Francis replaces Sir William Duncan who died last year.

**GUINNESS MAHON** is attempting to raise £7.5 million under the Business Expansion Scheme for what may be one of the last property ventures to qualify for the scheme's tax concessions. There are fears that the Chancellor will restrict BPS schemes in this year's budget so the bank has brought forward plans to launch Lockton Developments.

Lockton is seeking sites for commercial, industrial and retail use to realise development profits of around 20 per cent.

**MERCHANT** bankers Henry Ansbacher have agreed to sell their long-standing United States subsidiary, Lehigh Valley Bancorp, back to the shareholders from whom they purchased it in September 1984. Ansbacher paid \$2.7 million for the US company under a performance-related agreement in 1984. Now it has to provide for a loss of \$13.6 million on the deal in its next accounts.

## Retailers in point-of-sales payment project

### Banks agree cashless shopping scheme

By Margaret Dibben, Money Editor

Banks and retailers have reached the first stage of agreement towards setting up a revolutionary nationwide automatic payment system, although the most important areas of dispute have still to be resolved.

The system, called EFT-POS (Electronic Funds Transfer at Point of Sale), has been under discussion as a way of combating fraud for many months without either party accepting financial responsibility for what could be a £300 million investment.

The EFT-POS terminals, looking similar to the key-board of a through-the-wall cash machine, will sit on counter tops and be operated by shop staff. Most plastic cards will be accepted by the machines to pay for goods: credit cards, debit and charge cards; building society cards; and cash cards; depending on who finally joins the system.

The terminals will be most commonly used in petrol stations, food shops and department stores.

A new company has been formed under the leadership of Mr Douglas McCallum, of National Westminster Bank, to co-ordinate the development. Although both sides have already committed themselves to a British Telecom and IBM open system, other suppliers are still being considered.

To encourage participation, the banks and stores, represented by the Retail Consortium, have commissioned a study from accountants Deloitte to determine the costs and benefits of EFT-POS to banks, stores and customers.

However before this bank scheme gets off the ground in two years' time, EFT-POS equipment is designed to do

## Exports risk cover 'inadequate'

By David Simpson

The Export Credits Guarantee Department, the government agency which provides insurance backing for export orders for the UK, has had its latest accounts severely qualified by the Comptroller and Auditor General for setting aside inadequate amounts to cover possible losses which could arise from overseas countries defaulting on payments.

In his audit report, Mr Gordon Downie faults the department for failing to make any provision "relating to possible losses in respect of future political claims on substantial insurance business already underwritten."

The department's total provision for possible losses at the end of its last financial year to March 1984 were £512.1 million, which includes a general provision to cover political claims against ECGD expected to arise as a result of identified foreign exchange problems, up from £14.6 million in 1982/83 to £118.8 million.

But, the Comptroller and Auditor General stated the department should have made a provision in respect of political claims which could arise in the future, and its failure to do so could lead to a "material misstatement" of the department's cumulative reserves.

Over the year, the department saw its previous annual operating surplus of £208.7 million transformed into a £145 million deficit, partly because of lower premium income, representing depressed trade levels and the absence of substantial overseas contracts, and partly because of its overall 66.8 per cent increase in provisions for losses.

The department's cash reserves which stood at £280.7 million at the beginning of the year, were wiped out over its last financial year, and by October it had gone into debt to the Consolidated Fund to the tune of £373.6 million. By the close of the existing financial year, its borrowings are expected to reach £400 million.

## US confident on recovery

From Michael White in Washington

The US leading economic indicators published yesterday provided mixed signals about the American economic recovery continuing strongly into its third year. But key analysts remained confident that the recovery would go on despite \$123 billion record trade deficit for 1984 unveiled on Wednesday.

Six of the indicators available for December showed modest gains, but these were insufficient to offset declines in such activities as building permits, stock prices and — most conspicuously — in business formation and new orders for plant equipment. So the December index stood at 164.9 per cent of its 1967 base compared with 165.2 in November.

Some analysts attributed this to a running down of stock in the autumn and predicted that the index would bounce back by 2 per cent in January. While talk of a new recession has dwindled however others remain more cautious. Some discount the indicators altogether.

The basis for cheerfulness despite the worst decade of growing trade deficits since the 1970s was what one authoritative source yesterday called "a gross underestimation of the strength of our exports" despite the rampant value of the dollar — still 50 per cent up on 1980. This could add 1-1.5 per cent to the fourth quarter GNP for 1984, predicted one well-placed official and help sustain a strong dollar.

The US deficit, though nearly double 1983's \$62.4 billion, was less than the \$130-\$150 billion earlier predicted... and December's figures showed a drop in imports of 3.1 per cent and a rise in exports of 4.7 per cent, making a growth of 3.7 per cent overall against a sumpendous 26.4 per cent import surge for the whole year.

The overall picture in 1984 saw the US deficit with Japan rise to \$28.8 billion, slightly less with Taiwan and Canada, its other big trading partners. But with Western Europe — notably West Germany it shot up from a slight \$456 million to \$16.9 billion.

## Yarrow employee buy-out collapses

By David Simpson, Business Correspondent

A PLAN to arrange an employee buy-out at the Yarrow shipbuilding yard on the Clyde, the second most profitable of the state-owned warship yards currently up for auction collapsed yesterday when a substantial majority of the yard's workforce refused to support the scheme.

With bids for the yard due in less than three weeks, Barclays Development Capital, which was masterminding the employee consortium, insisted that it would only proceed if most workers indicated their backing for the plan. The bank had hoped to launch a joint bid on behalf of management and workforce for both Yarrow and the small Hall-Russell yard in Aberdeen.

But a ballot of Yarrow employees, concluded yesterday, showed only some 550 workers out of a 5,500 labour force in favour of the bid, and Barclays Development Capital has consequently withdrawn from the consortium. All but a handful of Hall-Russell's 800 employees had previously expressed their support for the bid plan.

Behind the decision of over 50 per cent of Yarrow's workforce not to respond to the ballot is the belief of the yard's union leaders that a better deal over pay and working practices can be struck with a commercial buyer for the yard than would be available under an employee buy-out.

Yarrow's managing director, Mr Bob Easton, who has been the architect of the plan expressed disappointment at the failure of the consortium yesterday and claimed that the options available to the workforce had been reduced, rather than improved, as a result.

## Boeing abandons head-on clash with Europe

By Michael Smith, Industrial Editor

American aerospace giant Boeing has abandoned plans to compete head-on with Europe's plane-making consortium Airbus Industrie in developing a new advanced 150-seater aircraft for the late 1980s.

Boeing, the world's biggest aircraft builder, has quietly decided not to challenge the Airbus A320, which rolls off the production line in 1988.

As an alternative, Boeing is now pressing ahead with plans to spend \$2 billion (£1.76 billion) developing a completely new, even further advanced passenger aircraft for introduction into airline service by 1992.

The new Boeing jet, which has not been given a name, will arrive in the market at least four years after the A320 and give the Europeans, including Britain with a 20 per cent stake in the consortium, a clear advantage. Until the new aircraft appears Boeing will pitch its existing 737 range of jets against the newer, more advanced A320 from Airbus in bidding for airline orders.

Aerospace experts believe that airlines will buy up to 3,000 aircraft in the 150-seater class by the end of the century, a market worth well over \$50 billion.

But Boeing is hoping that, by delaying a new launch until the early 1990s, it can cash in on further advances in plane-making technology that offers airlines a better aircraft than the A320.

Boeing is also examining the option of powering the new aircraft with a propeller driven engine now being developed by US combine, General Electric. Advanced use of rotor blades will make aircraft engines much lighter than existing turbo-fans and could be 40 per cent cheaper to operate.

## Midland's cushion for the future

By Peter Rodgers, City Editor

Midland bank yesterday organised a cushion for the future with a \$600 million five year fund raising operation, the largest floating rate certificate of deposit launched in London.

The five year certificate is a way of raising longer term deposits from the markets lengthening the average maturity of Midland's funding.

Organised by Midland's 60 per cent merchant banking subsidiary Samuel Montagu, the issue was originally \$400 million but was enlarged because so many investors wanted to buy it.

Although a bank deposit, the notes are tradeable like bonds, and Samuel Montagu and other banks will be making a market in them. However Samuel Montagu said that the issue does not count towards Midland's capital, and therefore does not solve any of the bank's problems associated with the drain of capital into the loss-making Crocker National subsidiary in California.

Midland is under pressure because its proportion of capital to loans has fallen and the bank needs to raise more capital to improve the balance.

## 'Life' firms' link-up

By Mary Brastor

Trident Life and Imperial Life of Canada are joining forces to become the UK's third largest unit linked company in a further realignment of the life assurance sector.

Imperial has agreed to buy Trident from General Re of Connecticut for an undisclosed sum. The combined group will have a sales force of 1,100 and funds of \$550 million under management. It will rank behind Hambro Life (now Allied Dunbar) and Abbey Life with sales forces of over 2,000 and provide a base from which Imperial hopes to develop its financial services business.

Imperial plans to add new products to the combined group and groom it for a possible USM flotation or an earlier placing of shares. "We have a lot of hard work ahead of us to produce good figures and go for the USM in three years," said Mr Wain.

Combined premium income for the two groups was around \$80 million last year suggesting a price tag of perhaps £150 million for Trident. The sale was initiated by European Banking Company which approached General Re last October proposing a consortium buy-out of the Trident Life business. Imperial, which was originally part of the consortium then decided to take 100 per cent of the life company.

General Re which announces figures, generally expected to be poor, in two weeks time, is also thought to be considering the sale of its general insurance Trident subsidiary in the UK. A deal to sell that company would take General Re out of the UK market altogether.

ITP which owns Abbey Life and Providence Capital which owns a UK life assurance company of the same name has also recently announced plans to reduce its UK presence.

Brewers of fine beers since 1830

Points made by the Chairman, Mr Patrick Townsend, in his annual statement for the year to 29th September 1984.

**The Year's Trading**

- Profit before tax, at £7,041,000, up 9.5% on 1983.
- Overall dividend, at 8.162p per share, increased by 10%.
- Beer sales volume marginally ahead. Stalton lager again a star performer — up 18% on 1983, not counting sales to the Take-Home market.
- Managed public houses and Matthew Brown Manor Houses produced best ever contribution to group profits.

**Investing for the Future**

- Policy of extending trading areas vigorously pursued during year.
- 18 public houses in Caidale acquired in January, 1984.
- T & R, Thealeston, with extensive trade in Yorkshire and well-known in the Take-Home market, acquired in June, 1984.
- Many new accounts opened in the Newcastle area.
- Improvement of Tied Estate continued, with 28 major renovations completed during year.
- Large increase in Stalton production capacity created by installation of 6 x 600 barrel conical fermenting vessels at Blackburn.
- Plans well advanced for major redevelopment of packaging, warehousing and distribution facilities at Blackburn.

**Prospects**

"The company has made great advances in the past few years to meet changing demands and our investment programme will continue. I believe that this policy, coupled with the maintenance of excellent quality and service will ensure further profitable growth in our traditional business."

## Hudd's 'hello and goodbye'

By Geoffrey Gibbs

The managing director of Trident Television Mr David Hudd stands to collect a £200,000 "golden handshake" package under the £122 million takeover of the casinos business by Plesaur.

Plesaur, which saw an earlier bid for Trident turned down by the Monopolies Commission two years ago, has decided not to retain the services of the Trident board. The directors including the £25,000 a year managing director will resign on the offer becoming unconditional.

Formal offer documents sent out to Trident shareholders yesterday show that Mr Hudd will be paid £185,000 in compensation for the termination of his service agreement which runs until August 1987. A further £23,000 will be paid to secure benefits for Mr Hudd under the company's pension scheme.

Trident shareholders are being asked to approve the payments at a special meeting. Mr Hudd, a former partner of chartered accountants Price Waterhouse, was paid a £40,000 "hello" when he joined Trident as assistant managing director and finance director in September 1982.

The computer systems house CAP was finally privatised yesterday via a compromise that gives effective control to the company's staff (average age 27) while still providing the Treasury with its £5.5 million pounds of cash.

CAP's fight to stay independent — which took nearly a year — means that today 800 of the 1,200 staff are shareholders, having raised nearly £2 million, mainly through long-term bank loans. The rest of the money comes from increased investment in preference shares by the other shareholders, the Coal Board pension fund and the Charterhouse group.

The staff now holds 69 per cent of the voting shares (compared with 31 per cent among 200 staff before) and the Government holds 35 per cent. The overall stake for £5.5 million. But the two City groups could upset that staff-control if they decided to convert their preference shares into ordinary voting shares.

The original hope was that the Government (through the old National Enterprise Board) would sell all its ordinary shares to the staff at £1.50 a share. But last August Ferranti offered the Government £2.50 a

## Bowring Results for the year ended 31st December, 1984 (Unaudited)

	1984	1983
Operating Revenue	114.0	95.2
Operating Expenses	(80.7)	(70.5)
Operating Profit	33.3	24.7
Share of Profits of Associates	2.0	1.6
Other Income	1.2	0.4
Profit before tax	36.5	26.7
Provision for U.K. tax	(17.2)	(15.1)
Profit after tax	19.3	11.6

- Operating Revenue has increased by 20%.
- Profit before tax has increased by 37%.

The above figures do not constitute full group accounts for the Bowring Group and have been adjusted to comply with generally accepted accounting practices in the United States. Earnings of subsidiary companies which were sold during 1983 and 1984 together with other items which are not relevant to operating performance have been excluded. The full financial statements for the year ended 31st December 1983 of C.T. Bowring & Co. Limited have been filed with the Registrar of Companies and the report of the auditors thereon was unqualified. The full financial statements for the year ended 31st December 1984 have not yet been reported upon by the auditors and have not yet been filed with the Registrar of Companies.

Copies of the full announcement may be obtained from the Secretary, C.T. Bowring & Co. Ltd., The Bowring Building, Tower Place, London EC3P 3BE.

A Member of  
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# Sparks begin to fly on the East Coast line

NEXT week British Rail will sign the first big contract in its electrification programme for the main line from London to Edinburgh, a £300 million investment that will provide work for

3,000 in both the private and public sectors. It won't make the trains any faster, so is it worth it? Geoff Andrews describes the thinking behind the biggest railway project for 25 years.

THE BIGGEST construction site in Britain is also the longest, the most visible — and the fastest.

Fast not only because 50,000 passengers travel right through the middle of it every day at up to 100 mph, but because within the next few days, just six months after it was given Cabinet approval, the electrification of the East Coast main line of British Rail will really take off with the award of its first big contract, worth about £60 million.

Over the next couple of years that will have built to a peak in which BR will be committing more than £300 million of its own money and safeguarding jobs or providing new employment for 3,000 people.

In the biggest reconstruction job since the electrification of the West Coast main line out of Euston more than 25 years ago, the changeover teams with statistics—33,000 holes filled with 200,000 tonnes of concrete, to carry masts that will support 2,800 miles of overhead wiring; four new telephone exchangers, and 14 feeder stations to relay the power.

Unlike the Euston electrification, this project will not bring the great leap forward in speed, because that has been taken care of in the intervening years by the introduction of HS1, 125 diesels on the line, a regular service of fixed formation trains that gets most of its criticism for overcrowding because it is impossible to increase the length of the

train to cope with the peaks. This time the change is motivated by economy, the dynamic savings that can be achieved by the change from diesel to electric, a 25 per cent reduction in maintenance costs, and 20 per cent off the price of fuel.

Added to that is the flexibility that variable formation trains can provide and their ability to 'boost' revenue by 10 per cent for every extra coach they pull, so that the 11 coach limit of King's Cross could go a long way to filling the extra demand which is expected to boost revenue by anything up to £10 million a year when electrification is complete, making an overall gain of somewhere between £16 million and £24 million a year.

Pulling those trains, made up of 334 new coaches costing £68 million, will be a new breed of locomotive, capable of 140 mph but limited to 125 mph, at least initially for economy reasons. Increasing to 140 mph would not produce sufficient benefits to counteract the extra traction costs and would involve converting all the locomotives to carry transponders so that they could react in time to a danger signal.

Where the locomotives and the coaches are to be built is one of the unanswered questions about the ECML project. British Rail Engineering will be pitching hard for the contracts, worth more than £130 million, but it will be up against fierce competition from the private sector.

Already they have been given an extension of an existing contract to build four suburban trains which will be the first in service when the initial part of the electrified line comes on stream in about two years' time.

This, BR insists, was not favouritism, simply that the trains if required had to be of the same design as those already using the outer suburban section to Hitchin which has been electrified for several years.

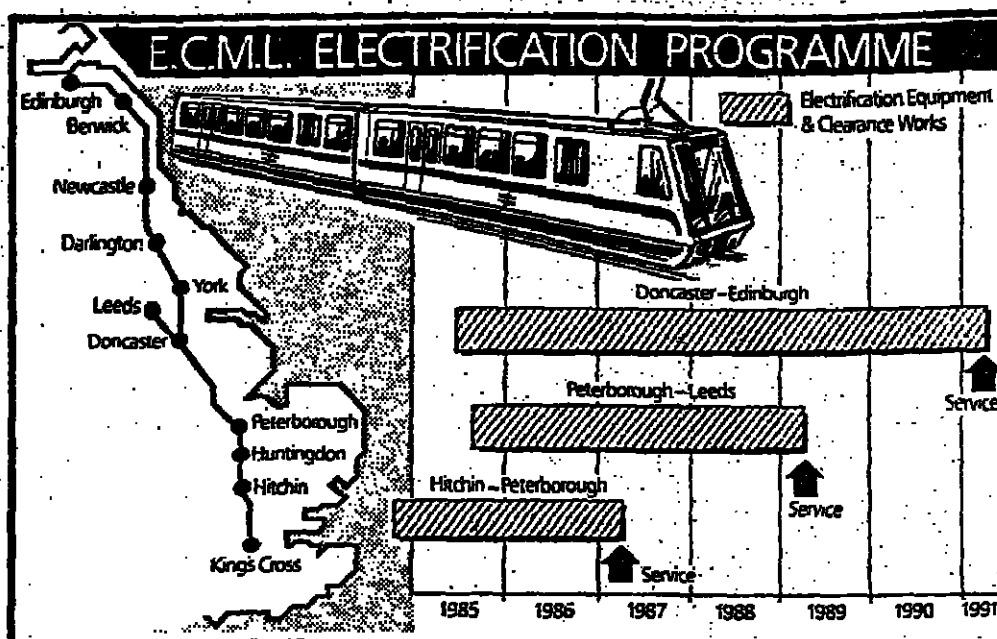
To go to a new design at this stage would have left BR with four bastard trains—a bad start to such a rational project.

Whether that £4 million contract tells against BR when the big contracts are handed out has yet to be seen, but there will undoubtedly be a huge slice of work for private industry.

Even if BREL got all the work there would still be the task of immunising signalling to the fittings of the coaches to be fought over, more than half the total cost of the equipment.

Small by comparison, but vital to the whole project is the task of immunising signalling to the electro-magnetic effects of the changeover.

Because the high voltage currents run parallel to the existing electrical signalling circuits, there is a danger of interference, which could, in extreme circumstances be catastrophic. To compensate for this, and the effect the new circuitry might have on adjoining services like those



of British Telecom is a particularly intricate and time-consuming process which will take up much of the £27 million signalling budget.

The sophistication of modern telecommunications is such that in some places it is cheaper to lower the tracks under a bridge carrying such services than to take the easy way out and rebuild the bridge with sufficient clearances for the electric wires.

In other places the demolition of bridges to make way for early construction work has been under way for some months now. Despite the short notice given for the go-ahead on the scheme BR engineers were busily demolishing and modifying bridges early in the autumn to make way for the new scheme, working north

from London to keep at least one jump ahead of the construction gangs.

A total of 127 bridges are to be raised on the route together with a handful of crossings where local conditions dictate that tracks have to be lowered instead. One such is at Holgate in York, where the difficulty of realigning the roadway for a raised bridge would make reconstruction so expensive that all eight tracks passing underneath are to be lowered instead.

Fortunately the East Coast line is virtually free of tunnels except at the northern and southern extremities. At the southern end of King's Cross tunnels are already electrified for the suburban services to Hitchin.

At the Edinburgh end a potentially expensive modification of the Calton Tunnel

on the outskirts of the city has been avoided because it was due for rebuilding anyway, and including the extra clearance for electrification will be a comparatively simple addition to that task, which can be completed in good time for the arrival of the crews erecting the wiring.

And while all this wiring, screening, lowering, raising, demolishing and rebuilding is going on, the trains are scheduled to run with delays of only about eight minutes says Don Heath, BR's project manager for the ECML scheme. He hopes to cut back even further on those delays by careful scheduling of the programme working at night on the two track sections of the line and around the clock where there are four tracks.

The entire scheme is being funded from within BR, a decision that some feel reflects little credit on government claims that this is one of its major investment areas.

Don Heath thinks otherwise, describing it as "a classic example of self-help." He would like to see the whole scheme completed within the six and a half year time schedule he is working to but acknowledges that this would mean deferring some other projects of finding more cash at the end of the project.

"It will be a delicate housekeeping operation to decide whether that is possible," he added.

When complete BR will be able to boast that almost 60 per cent of its InterCity network will have been electrified. But why stop there?

With the two principal North-South routes electric, what about the West Country?

The short answer is that nothing is yet decided. Not only would that or any other route have to come up with a convincing case for conversion with a return on capital which compared with the 7 per cent of the East Coast line, there is also the question of what to do with redundant HS125s, which will be sufficiently abundant when the Edinburgh project has been completed to be relegated to a number of cross country routes as well as providing service for many years on those parts of the network that still await electrification.

## Self-inflicted wounds putting Dunlop in peril

James Erlichman on two errors that could deflate the Edwardes image

HAD a man of Sir Michael Edwardes' reputed prowess shot himself in the foot at Dunlop, just once, his mistake might have been judged unfortunate.

But to misfire twice as he did within hours — damaging both his personal reputation in the eyes of many and the prospects for his ailing company — seems a feat of uncharacteristic folly.

These self-inflicted wounds may yet bring the final death rattle to Dunlop and deflate his image as a commercial superstar. The financial lifeline thrown to Dunlop by its bankers may be jeopardised.

Sir Michael's first mistake was to put his name to a package of personal perks so large that they transformed the sensible incentive of a shares option scheme into a king's ransom. By taking options on 20 million shares from Dunlop's bankers, he stood personally to gain £2 million if the company's shares stood just 10p higher in the years between 1987 and 1989.

Sir Michael's initial defence of the deal was that the banks, which had agreed to keep Dunlop afloat, were eager to reward him for protecting their heavy and precarious investment.

But one of the prime jobs of any good executive is to protect his company from unwelcome predators. The day after Dunlop's salvation was announced a crafty noose was thrown around its leaden feet. BTR, the industrial conglomerate, slipped discreetly into the stock market and grabbed over 25 per cent of Dunlop's preference shares — a small but crucial class of Dunlop's equity which everyone but they, and their advisers, Morgan Grenfell, had ignored.

The shares swoop may not have been gentlemanly — or even fair to Dunlop's employees and shareholders — but it was entirely legal and it now gives BTR apparent veto power to block Dunlop's entire financial reconstruction.

Predictably enough, BTR launched a £33 million takeover bid for Dunlop the very next day. Some of the debacle must be laid at the doors of Hill Samuel and S.G. Warburg, Dunlop's two merchant banks which, while on handsome retainers, failed to ensure that no predator pounced with a killer blow.

BTR wants Dunlop's business as cheaply as it can get them. The question is whether Sir Owen Green, is genuinely prepared to make a lot of enemies by forcing Dunlop into receivership.

If BTR's own takeover bid were to lapse or fail, whatever reason, then it could still buy up Dunlop's attractive assets from the bargain basement and disregard the rest.

The showdown vote on February 8 may never come. BTR is now trying behind the scenes to agree its own deal with Dunlop's bankers. So far negotiations have been cool. This is because

BTR wants the banks to swap £100 million of Dunlop's debt for its own preference shares as a condition of the £33 million bid. Had it not been for all their enthusiasm for Sir Michael, might have leapt with indecent haste into Sir Owen Green's arms.

The impasse arises because not even BTR, whose financial muscle is considerable, wants to allow Dunlop's entire £435 million debt when rising interest rates are, in real terms, the highest since 1922.

Dunlop's banks, which include Barclays and National Westminster, will not be keen to buy them. They kindly still tell BTR to get on with it, but the whole protracted affair. They threatened the previous board with this action. This could, however, be more costly than the banks admit. It claimed that their hold on Dunlop's remaining assets is so secure that they would lose very little if the company were broken up in the receiver. But now they are in a bind. They believe the banks are still in for a bundle and cannot escape.

On the other hand, BTR's takeover task will be made immeasurably easier if it can agree a deal with the banks and offer a real alternative rescue package to Dunlop shareholders on February 8. To that end, BTR will probably have to scale down or abandon its own preference shares demand on the banks.

If BTR can agree a deal with the banks, it will then withdraw its veto and allow Dunlop shareholders to judge fairly whether they want to join BTR or stay with the Edwardes recovery vehicle. This is the question Sir Michael put to Sir Owen and the answer apparently is no, even though BTR says it will not discuss the issue in public.

But BTR is hardly home and dry. Sir Michael is, if nothing else, extremely resourceful especially when fighting from a corner. In addition, BTR's offer price as disclosed in its offer document yesterday, is still only 21.7p a share — miles below the 36p that Dunlop shares traded at yesterday. Shareholders, if they get the chance, may well reckon they stand a better chance of recouping their losses by gambling on a snap Dunlop recovery rather than by being locked into the blue chip BTR. And, even at this late hour, there is nothing to prevent another bidder arriving on the scene.

Dunlop is clearly desperate to keep its shareholders loyal. Sir Michael and his lieutenants have "released" the banks from their share option schemes "until the present uncertainty has been resolved." Significantly, however, they have left the door ajar to recoup their potential ransom if, against the odds, they succeed in keeping BTR from the boardroom door.

THIS DOCUMENT IS IMPORTANT AND REQUIRES YOUR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION. If you are in any doubt about the action to be taken you should consult your stockbroker, bank manager, solicitor, accountant or other professional adviser immediately. Expressions used in this document, shall, unless the context requires otherwise, bear the same meaning as in the Tender Offer Document dated 22nd January, 1985 from Morgan Grenfell & Co. Limited.

## THE BRITISH LAND COMPANY PLC TENDER OFFER

to acquire up to 9,023,337 Limited Voting Ordinary shares in  
**STYLO PLC**

**MORGAN GRENFELL & CO. LIMITED**  
(Registered in England No. 315841)

Registered Office:  
23 Great Winchester Street,  
London EC2P 2AX

30th January, 1985

To all Limited Voting Ordinary shareholders of Stylo PLC and, for information only, to Stylo Management shareholders.

Dear Sir or Madam,

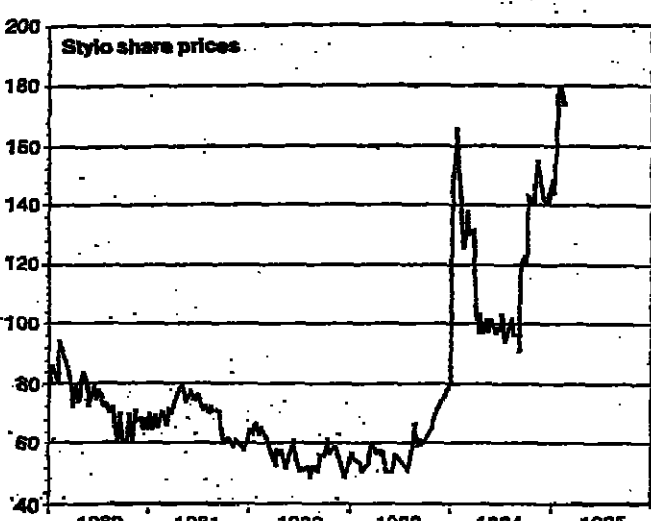
On 22nd January, 1985 the Board of British Land announced that it was making an offer to acquire by tender up to a maximum of 9,023,337 Limited Voting Ordinary shares in Stylo, representing, together with British Land's existing holding of Stylo Ordinary shares, 29.99 per cent. of the voting rights and 50.90 per cent. of the issued share capital of Stylo.

**STYLO ORDINARY SHAREHOLDERS ARE REMINDED THAT THE TENDER OFFER CLOSES AT 3.00 P.M. ON TUESDAY, 5TH FEBRUARY, 1985 AND CANNOT BE INCREASED OR EXTENDED.**

Forms of Tender, duly completed in accordance with the instructions therein, must be received by British Land's registrars, Hill Samuel Registrars Limited, 6 Greencoat Place, London SW1P 1PL by this time.

Shareholders who wish to tender all or part of their holding of Stylo Ordinary shares and to receive New British Land shares (the "Share Alternative") must deliver a duly completed Form of Tender together with share certificate(s) and/or document(s) of title, to Hill Samuel Registrars Limited by 3.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 5th February, 1985. British Land reserves the right to treat tenders for the Share Alternative (but not the Cash Alternative) as valid even though not complete in all respects or not accompanied by the relevant share certificate(s) and/or other documents.

Set out below is a graph showing the price movement of Stylo Ordinary shares over the last five years based on the middle market quotation at the close of business on the first business day of each week.



The maximum value of the Share Alternative under the Tender Offer is 195p and that of the Cash Alternative is 185p (the former being based on the middle market quotation for British Land shares of 137p at the close of business on 28th January, 1985 derived from The Stock Exchange Daily Official List). On 28th January, 1985, the price of Stylo Ordinary shares was 172p, which compares with a price of 168p on 21st January, 1985, the day before the Tender Offer was announced (in each case based on the middle market quotation at the close of business derived from The Stock Exchange Daily Official List) and the price of 88p paid by British Land on 10th September, 1984, when it bought 795,000 Stylo Ordinary shares.

**STYLO ORDINARY SHAREHOLDERS ARE STRONGLY ADVISED TO CONSULT THEIR PROFESSIONAL ADVISERS IMMEDIATELY AS TO THE MERITS OF THE TENDER OFFER.**

Yours faithfully,  
for MORGAN GRENFELL & CO. LIMITED  
D. J. EWART  
Director

Further copies of the Form of Tender may be obtained from and any enquiries should be made to:

Hill Samuel Registrars Limited,  
6 Greencoat Place,  
London SW1P 1PL.  
01-628 4521

Morgan Grenfell & Co. Limited,  
New Lease Department,  
21 Austin Friars,  
London EC2N 2HE.  
01-583 4545 ext. 2294

L. Messel & Co.,  
P.O. Box 521,  
1 Finsbury Avenue,  
London EC2M 2DE.  
01-577 0123 ext. 4493

The Directors of British Land are the persons responsible for the information contained in this document. To the best of the knowledge and belief of the Directors (who have taken all reasonable care to ensure that such is the case) the information contained in this document is in accordance with the facts and does not omit anything likely to affect the import of such information. The Directors accept responsibility accordingly.

## Barclaycard Interest Rate.

### NOTICE TO CARDHOLDERS

Barclaycard regrets that as a result of the rise in interest rates generally it is necessary to increase the monthly rate of interest charged to Cardholders to 2.0%, equivalent to an annual rate of charge of 26.8% for purchases and, typically, 27.2% for cash advances.

Clause 5 (a)(i) of the Conditions of Use is amended accordingly.

Interest at the new rate calculated on the daily balances left outstanding from the previous statement date will be charged and shown on Cardholders' statements issued from 1st March 1985 and thereafter until further notice. No interest is charged if the whole of the outstanding balance is repaid by the 25th day following the date of the statement.

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MANCHESTER M3 2ER.  
Tel. 061-625 8665 during office hours or Tel. 0631 770127 evgs. or weekends.

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# FINANCIAL GUARDIAN

## Rowland raises his Lonrho stake

By Geoffrey Gibbs

The Lonrho chief executive, Mr. Tony Rowland, has increased his personal stake in the company to 12.2 million shares, valued at £12.2 million, after purchasing 1.2 million shares in the company yesterday.

Mr. Rowland, who has been in the company since 1974, has been a major shareholder since 1974, when he bought 1.2 million shares at 10p each. His stake has since grown to 12.2 million shares, valued at £12.2 million.

Mr. Rowland's stake is now the largest of any individual shareholder in the company, which has a market capitalization of £1.2 billion.

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The City would be surprised to see any major acquisition move before the outcome of the Monopolies Commission inquiry into the relationship between Lonrho and House of Fraser is known.

Lonrho, which made a £49 million profit on the disposal of its holding in the Al Fayed brothers, has been a major shareholder in the company since 1974, when it bought 1.2 million shares at 10p each. Its stake has since grown to 12.2 million shares, valued at £12.2 million.

Mr. Rowland's stake is now the largest of any individual shareholder in the company, which has a market capitalization of £1.2 billion.



Tony Rowland

## Investors mark time ahead of next rate cut

Stock markets had a much needed breather yesterday after the better-than-expected move of recent days. Hopes that the high trend in interest rates will soon be reversed helped sentiment, although there was some disappointment that the day had passed without any new incentive from the Bank of England.

Nevertheless, most dealers expect a reduction soon, perhaps after next week's money supply indications, which will be studied closely. The change in mood continued to support government stocks, which gained five-eighths among conventional issues and almost a point in index-linked stocks.

Equities were less exuberant, preferring to consolidate Wednesday's recovery in share prices. Leaders ended mixed, although American interest again provided a late push for some international favourites. Leading oils were particularly strong for this reason, Shell illustrating the trend with a 27p jump to 745p.

### THE MARKETS

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### COMPANY BRIEFING

#### Blundell margins under pressure

Blundell-Permaglaze, the leading independent paint manufacturer, fell far short of previous and anticipated profit levels in the year to October 31, with pressure on margins intensified.

Losses in Ireland and the squeeze on prices imposed by the big retailers and competition from larger chemical and multinational suppliers produced a result over 40 per cent below the chairman's forecast, including the more cautious July estimate.

#### Computer strength

Two deals aimed at strengthening exports of British computer software were finalised yesterday. Both are symptoms of the drift away from small software houses to multinational conglomerates as the industry grows more hectic.

Shares in Systems Designers, which has a turnover of £85p, are up 10p to 95p, while the company's share price has risen to 1.10p.

#### Setbacks for CPS

CPS Computer, the IBM distributor and software group, has encountered some setbacks in its progress towards full integration of systems supply, so it is just as well that it is sharing in the growth of the domestic hardware products.

Until yesterday, the US-listed shares had shown some resistance in the shake-out of glamour-rated computer issues. The disappointing results and warnings that although prospects are bright, the company is offering a new share on a two-to-five basis, issued at 45p, a huge 150p discount if current share prices hold.

#### Cons Gold wins Bath

Consolidated Gold Fields is home and dry in its agreed £61.5 million takeover bid for Bath and Portland, the West country based quarrying and construction group.

The offer was yesterday declared unconditional in all respects after the government gave the takeover the green light by announcing that the proposed merger of the two businesses was not being referred to the Monopolies Commission.

#### Problem prone

Thomas French the Ruffette curtains manufacturer and electronics distributor has had more than its fair share of problems in its large overseas operations to content with the recent years' growth has continued. The Australian fire and resulting insurance receipt were the main feature of the year to September 29, causing a fall in profit, but a rise in net income.

After a £3 million increase in the interim stage, turnover flattened out as a result of the December 1983 fire in Sydney and the total emerged at £25.4 million, against £23.1 million, including a few weeks of the furnishings distribution business acquired in Australia in August.

After some rapid sales gains in recent years, turnover managed only a £1.76 million improvement to £37.1 million, most of the increase having already occurred at the interim stage. The sale of the industrial division to Manders for £1.5 million came just after the year end, but the German acquisition of a 50 per cent stake in a full year and achieved strong growth.

Pre-tax profit slumped by £800,000 to £1.24 million, and there was also an extraordinary net debit of £452,000 arising from the sale of the industrial division, which was a source of economic activity, and demand is still flat there. In Germany, Contilack was in the black after interest charges and exports were again quite an important feature of the home-based business.

The final dividend of 4.7p leaves the total at 4.7p, covered by earnings of 10.5p. Financials are strong and will remain so after the Hamilton Star truck-manufacturing acquisition which is costing a little more than the industrial plant sale is producing over a period.

The shares fell 12p to 137p.

The directors are satisfied with performance in most areas and the difficulties over Nigerian payments and import controls are less serious. The electrical branch has encountered rising demand and previous progress in electronics has been consolidated. The shares remained at 89p, well above their low point but not a high valuation if the Australian expansion goes as planned and earnings rebound above 10p.

Turnover for the year to September 30 edged ahead to £2.08 million, from £2.07 million, but the trawler fleet has now been reduced to four vessels by the sale of nine this month.

Pre-tax profit slipped to £2.08 million, from £2.07 million.

The final dividend is raised to 2.5p, taking the total up to 2.75p, from 2.5p net a share, paid out of earnings of 8.6p.

Life insurers reflected satisfaction with a cheerful seminar at Wood Mackenzie the previous day. Money brokers rose sharply on takeover speculation, and shipping shares were favoured. Banks were largely ignored, with Bank of Scotland down 20p to 465p after comment on Wednesday's Barclays/Standard Life deal.

Alexandra Workwear, which was almost 100 times oversubscribed, made a sparkling debut at 136p, a premium of 86p over the offer-for-sale price. There was late demand for Vickers at 232p, up 12p, on hopes of good order later this month, particularly from the Rolls Royce motor subsidiary.

### THE STOCK EXCHANGE

British Funds	14th 1986	15th 1986	16th 1986	17th 1986	18th 1986	19th 1986	20th 1986	21st 1986	22nd 1986	23rd 1986	24th 1986	25th 1986	26th 1986	27th 1986	28th 1986	29th 1986	30th 1986	31st 1986	1st 1986	2nd 1986	3rd 1986	4th 1986	5th 1986	6th 1986	7th 1986	8th 1986	9th 1986	10th 1986	11th 1986	12th 1986	13th 1986	14th 1986	15th 1986	16th 1986	17th 1986	18th 1986	19th 1986	20th 1986	21st 1986	22nd 1986	23rd 1986	24th 1986	25th 1986	26th 1986	27th 1986	28th 1986	29th 1986	30th 1986	31st 1986	1st 1986	2nd 1986	3rd 1986	4th 1986	5th 1986	6th 1986	7th 1986	8th 1986	9th 1986	10th 1986	11th 1986	12th 1986	13th 1986	14th 1986	15th 1986	16th 1986	17th 1986	18th 1986	19th 1986	20th 1986	21st 1986	22nd 1986	23rd 1986	24th 1986	25th 1986	26th 1986	27th 1986	28th 1986	29th 1986	30th 1986	31st 1986	1st 1986	2nd 1986	3rd 1986	4th 1986	5th 1986	6th 1986	7th 1986	8th 1986	9th 1986	10th 1986	11th 1986	12th 1986	13th 1986	14th 1986	15th 1986	16th 1986	17th 1986	18th 1986	19th 1986	20th 1986	21st 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CRYSTAL Palace have offered William £30,000 for their mid-field player, Ray Lewington, who would fill the gap left by Peter Nicholas, who joined







## BBC-1

6.00 am Cee-fax AM. 6.30 Breakfast Time. 9.00 Pages from Cee-fax. 10.30 Play School. 10.50 Pages from Cee-fax. 12.30 pm News After Noon. 12.57 Regional News. 1.00 Pebble Mill at One. 1.45 Chock-a-Block. 2.00 International Snooker. 3.45 Regional News. 5.30 Play School. 4.10 The Hunter. 4.15 Jackanory. Harry's Mad by Dick King Smith. 4.30 Finders Keepers. 4.55 News-round Extra. 5.5 The Machine Gunners.

5.30 FRIDAY PEOPLE. Mike Smith talks to prodigal daughter Angela Ripston about her stint in the States, and spends a day with Julie Walters, who said "No" to Hollywood. 5.58 Weather.

6.00 NEWS. REGIONAL NEWS MAGAZINES.

6.55 BLANKETY BLANK. More sophisticated repartee with Les Dawson and tonight's wordsmiths, including Tessa Sanderson, Fred Hougho, Patricia Hayes.

7.30 INTERNATIONAL SNOOKER. Live coverage of the early frames in the last quarter-final of the Benson and Hedges Masters, with David Icke setting the scene at Wembley Conference Centre.

8.0 STARSKY AND HUTCH. Tap Dancing Her Way Right Back Into Your Hearts. P. M. Glaser, D. Soul as the informal lawmen of the over-familiar series, this week in the one where both adopt unlikely disguises to investigate blackmail and murder at an apparently respectable dance studio.

Paul Michael Glaser, undisguised

8.50 POINTS OF VIEW. Barry Took with another batch of viewers' comments.

9.0 NEWS. weather.

9.25 INTERNATIONAL SNOOKER. Back to the little coloured balls, as the nine-frame quarter-final continues.

10.0 CITY ON FIRE. Heroic medics and fearless firefighters toil to rescue the city-centre hospital patients from the horizontal inferno fast spreading from the oil refinery, while assorted small human dramas ignite all over the place. Barry "Petrolcelli" Newman, Henry Fonda, Shelley Winters and Ava Gardner lead risible disaster pic, made in 1979.

11.40 INTERNATIONAL SNOOKER. Further coverage, and the result from the Wembley Conference Centre, as the last semi-final emerges. 12.40 Weather. close.

Wales: 5.30 pm Interval. 5.35 - 5.58 Wales Today. 5.58 - 6.00 Wales in Your Eyes. 6.00 Odyssey: The South Sevens. 6.30 - 6.58 Submarine.

## BBC-2

9.00 am Pages from Cee-fax. 9.30 Daytime on Two: Science Topics; 9.52 Look and Read; 10.15 Mathscore Two; 10.30 Exploring Science; 11.00 Look, Look and Look Again; 11.22 Geography 11-13; 11.44 Going to Work; 12.5 pm Making the Most of the Micro; 1.20 Sorry Mate, I Didn't See You; 1.25 You Can't See the Wood for the Trees; Thinking in Action; 1.30 Around Scotland; 2.00 Scene; 2.30 English File. 3.00 Pages from Cee-fax. 3.45 International Snooker.

5.25 NEWS with subtitles; weather.

5.30 WORLD SKI-ING CHAMPIONSHIPS. The Men's Combined Downhill.

6.00 THE INVADERS: The Condemned. Roy Thinnes leads the old SF serial.

6.50 PHIL SILVERS. As Sgt. Bilko.

7.15 ORS 85. Carl and Suggs from Madness are the live music guests, with Nick Heyward, Floozie Up CP, Howard Jones, and Scansion providing the music.

8.5 NATURE. Tony Soper and Brian Leith return with a new series of the magazine on the natural world, reporting first on a tropical bird paradise in West Africa, and on new research into a powerful chemical produced by the body which is a hundred times more powerful than morphine. Plus an eye-opening film for sensitive gourmets, on the way foie gras is produced.

8.55 GARDENERS' WORLD: Shades Of Summer. Roy Lancaster and Graham Rose visit Kiftgate, in Gloucestershire, to talk to the new owner about the responsibility of running a famous garden. Cee-fax sub-titles.

9.0 VICTORIA WOOD - AS SEEN ON TV.

9.30 THE NEW PACIFIC. 3. Over Rich. Over Sexed... And Over Here. How has tourism affected the island peoples of the Pacific? Latest programme in the series looks at Hawaii, where Polynesian culture has been thoroughly exploited and commercialised - and at the very different case of Bali, where tourism money has not been allowed to spoil the local culture, but encouraged to support it.

10.30 NEWSNIGHT. Including an interview by Robin Denelow with the reclusive ex-Beatle, George Harrison: about his film company, Handmade, which has a couple of the most successful movies in the cinemas today.

11.15 PARANOIC. Is poor Janette Scott being driven round the twist by brother Oliver Reed so he can inherit the family loot? 12.40 Close.

Wales: 10.35 - 11.00 am Outlook.

## ITV London

6.15 am Good Morning Britain. 9.25 News Headlines; Schools; 9.30 A Place to Live; 9.47 How We Used to Live; 9.50 Ways with Words; 10.25 The German Programme; 10.45 Insight; 11.05 My World; 11.22 Middle English; 11.30 Modern China - The Heart of the Dragon; 12.00 Emma and Grandpa; 12.10 What's New; Oracle sub-titles; 12.30 What's New; 1.30 Film: Mark of the Phoenix (1957), with Julia Arnall, Sheldon Lawrence, Anton Diffring. 3.00 Gents. 3.25 News Headlines. 3.30 Sons and Daughters. 4.00 Rainbow. Oracle sub-titles. 4.20 The Moonzies. 4.25 How Dare You! Oracle sub-titles. 4.50 Freetime. 5.15 Blockbusters.

5.45 NEWS; weather.

6.00 THE 6 O'CLOCK SHOW.

6.00 ME AND MY GIRL: Sticky Fingers. Richard O'Sullivan as the sitcom single parent, roping in his partner (Tim Brooke-Taylor) to teach his naughty daughter a lesson for a lifetime. Oracle sub-titles.

7.30 FAMILY FORTUNES. Max Bygraves with the quiz for kink.

8.00 THE PRACTICE. Another visit to the serial's health centre, where local PC Harris (Howard Lloyd Lewis) is at the centre of a row, and student Colin (Adam Church) is finding general practice hard going. Oracle sub-titles.

8.30 DEMPSEY AND MAKEPEACE. Given to Acts of Violence. Aren't they all? Michael Brandon, Glynis Barber as the police partners in another pow! splat! episode. Oracle sub-titles.

9.30 THAT'S MY BOY: What Seems to Be the Trouble? Why can't Ida settle in Yorkshire? Mollie Sugden as the doughty dowager, finding it hard to come to terms with her new home. Oracle sub-titles.

10.00 NEWS AT TEN; weather.

10.30 THE LONDON PROGRAMME. John Taylor reports on the plan by 16 Labour-controlled London councils to defy the Government over rate-capping.

11.00 SOUTH OF WATFORD. A profile of controversial playwright Steven Berkoff.

11.30 THE SHAKEDOWN. Harry H. Corbett, Donald Pleasence lead elderly (1958) Brit thriller about a racket revolving round a seedy photographic studio.

1.10 JOURNEY TO THE UNKNOWN: Paper Dolls. Michael Tolan and Nanette Newman lead this chiller about a young boy, one of quads, who can control his three brothers.

2.00 NIGHT THOUGHTS with Mather Krishnamurti. Closedown.

Wales: As West except 6.00 pm Wales at Six.

1.15 Just Jazz. 4.15 Close.

HTV

6.15 As London. 12.30 Never Mind the Handicap. 1.00 News. 1.20 As London. 1.30 Film: Saboteur. 1936 Hitchcock thriller with Sylvia Sydney, Oscar Homolka. 2.30 As London. 2.40 As London. 2.50 As London. 3.00 As London. 3.10 As London. 3.20 As London. 3.30 As London. 3.40 As London. 3.50 As London. 4.00 As London. 4.10 As London. 4.20 As London. 4.30 As London. 4.40 As London. 4.50 As London. 5.00 As London. 5.10 As London. 5.20 As London. 5.30 As London. 5.40 As London. 5.50 As London. 6.00 As London. 6.10 As London. 6.20 As London. 6.30 As London. 6.40 As London. 6.50 As London. 7.00 As London. 7.10 As London. 7.20 As London. 7.30 As London. 7.40 As London. 7.50 As London. 8.00 As London. 8.10 As London. 8.20 As London. 8.30 As London. 8.40 As London. 8.50 As London. 9.00 As London. 9.10 As London. 9.20 As London. 9.30 As London. 9.40 As London. 9.50 As London. 10.00 As London. 10.10 As London. 10.20 As London. 10.30 As London. 10.40 As London. 10.50 As London. 11.00 As London. 11.10 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